Buddhism in the Punjab Haryana and Himachal Pradesh

By

D. C. Ahir

Maha Bodhi Society of India
Mandir Marg, New Delhi

MUNSHI RAM MANOHAR LAL
Oriental & Foreign Book-Sellers
P.B. 1165, Nai Sarak, DELHI-6

Published by :

Ven. L. Ariyawansa Maha Thera
Buddha Vihara, Mandir Marg,
NEW DELHI-1.

Price Rs. 5/-

B. E. 2515

September 1971

Printed at
Vikas Press Co-op. Ind. Society Ltd.
Prehlad Market, Karol Bagh, New Delhi-5.

To

Bhadant Anand Kausalyayan

The First

Punjabi Buddhist monk

teacher and preacher

of

modern times.

Preface

Prior to the partition of the Indian sub-Continent in August 1947, the united Punjab was the country enclosed and watered by the five rivers-Sutlej, Beas, Ravi, Chenab and Jhelum. Then, it was divided into two halves-the East Punjab and the West Punjab. In essence, this study covers the modern States of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh which came into being on November 1, 1966 consequent upon the reorganisation of the East Punjab on linguistic basis. However, the places like Taxila and Sialkot in the West Punjab have also been treated to some extent as these were, for many centuries, the epicentre of the Buddhistic activities in ancient Punjab.

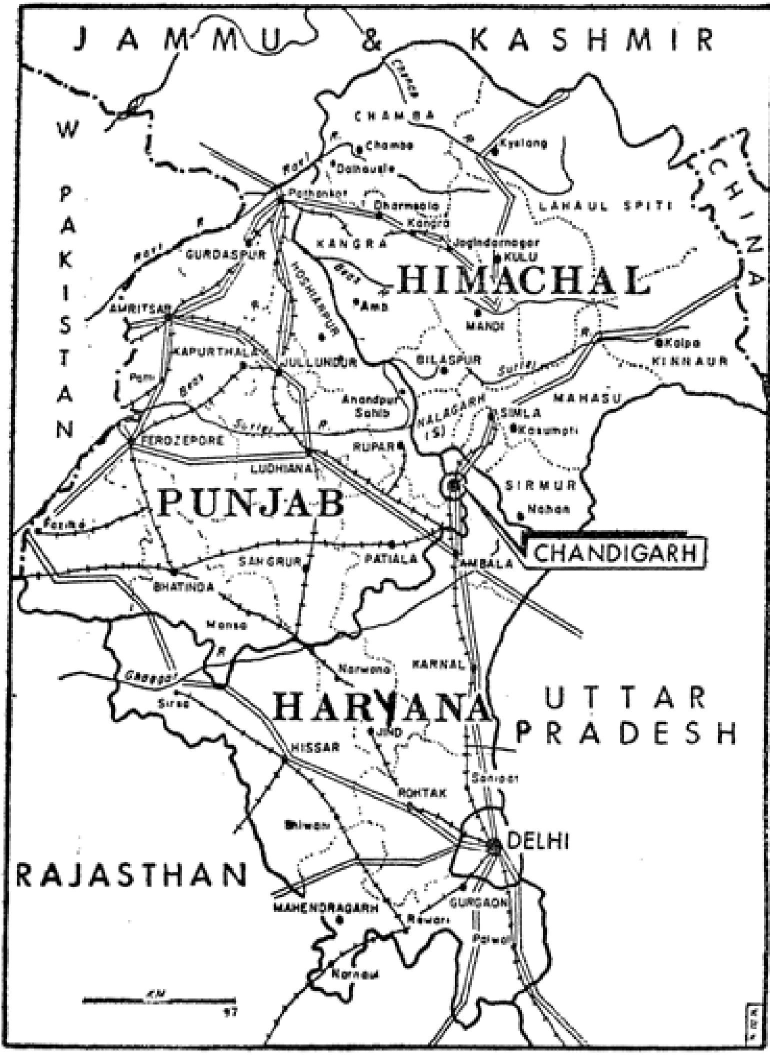
Any historical thesis must be supported by the literary and/or archaeological evidence. In the present case, there is no dearth of the literary evidence. But we are not so lucky in so far as the archaeological evidence is concerned. Notwithstanding the scant sources, an effort has been made to present a ralated history of 2500 years of Buddhism in the Punjab, Haryana and

Himachal Pradesh. A chapter on Buddhism and Sikhism has also been added in order to show how far the religion of the Buddha and the religion of Nanak have a common base The influence of Pali on Punjabi, the language of modern Punjab, has also been highlighted.

I hope this short survey of the rich heritage of Buddhism in the Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh will be found useful and inspiring by the readers.

D. C. Ahir

CONTENTS



The map shows the boundaries of the States of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh as on 1st November, 1966.

INTRODUCTION

Buddhism came to Punjab through the Buddha Himself. And within three hundred years of the Mahaparinirvana of the Tathagata it had gained quite a good hold in the land of the five rivers. Thereafter, for about 1000 years, Buddhism was the predominant religion of the people in this region. During that period, a galaxy of Buddhist saints, scholars, poets and philosophers enriched the culture of Punjab. Not only that, the Buddhists of Punjab influenced and moulded the destiny of Buddhism in other parts of India as well.

The non-canonical Pali Buddhist Scripture Milindapanho (Questions of Milinda)-a dialogue between the philosopher king Milinda and Venerable Nagasena in the 2nd century B. C. - is still widely read throughout the Buddhist lands. Again, the Fourth Buddhist Council was held in the Punjab at Jalandhara in about 100 A.C. Asanga and Vasubandhu, two eminent philosophers and teachers of Buddhism who wrote many works in Sanskrit in the 4th century A. C., also belonged to Punjab. The other important teachers of Buddhism in the Punjab were: Katyayana; Parsva, Vasumitra and Manortha (1st century A.C.); Kumarlata (3rd century A.C.); and

Vinitiprabha and Chandravarma (7th century A.C.)

In the political history of Buddhism in India, the names of the four Kings, namely, Asoka (3rd century B.C.) Milinda (2nd century B.C.) Kanishka (1st century A.C.) and Harsha (7th century A.C.) shine above all Three of these mighty Kings flourished in the Punjab and the fourth, namely, Asoka, had also started his career in the Punjab as prior to ascending the throne of Magadha he had been for some time the Mauryan Viceroy at Taxila.

Buddhism was quite flourishing in the Punjab till the end of the 7th century A. C. According to Hiuen Tsang, there were as many as 50 Viharas and about 2000 Bhikkhus in Jalandhara (Jullundur), the capital city of King Wuddhi. Thaneswar (original capital of Harsha) had three Viharas and about 700 Bhikkhus. In Kulu, the pilgrim saw 20 Viharas with about 1000 Bhikkhus in them.

While Buddhism, under the weight of political and religious upheavels, disappeared from the plains of Punjab more than a thousand years ago, it was able to escape the onslaught in some hilly tracts and is even to-day a living faith in the valleys of Lahul, Spiti, and Kinnaur–all in modern Himachal Pradesh.

Chapter I

BUDDHA'S VISIT TO PUNJAB

In the sixth century B.C. when Gautama the Buddha was born, Northern India was divided into many monarchical and non-monarchical States. The names of the monarchical States were Anga, Magadha, Kasi, Kosala, Vajji, Malla, Chedi, Vatsa, Kuru, Panchala, Matsya, Saursena, Asmaka, Avanti, Gandhara and Kamboja. The non-monarchical States were those of the Sakyas of Kapilvastu, the Mallas of Pava and Kushinara, the Lichhavis of Vaisali, the Videhas of Mithila, the Koliyas of Ramagama, the Bulis of Allakapa, the Kalingas of Resaputta, the Mauryas of Pipphalvana and the Bhaggas of Sumsumara Hill.

The birth place of the Buddha was Lumbini, near Kapilvastu, 'capital of the Sakyas'. He attained Buddha-hood at the age of 35 at Bodh Gaya, and two months later He preached

His First Sermon at Sarnath (Isipatana). Thereafter, for forty-five years He went about the country preaching His doctrine glorious before laying down His mortal body at Kushinagar. Though the tours of the Buddha were mainly confined to North-East India or say to Anga, Magadha, Kasi. Kosala, Vajji, Malla, Chedi, Avanti, Kapilvastu, Vaisali; and Pava-Kushinara States of those days but He occasionally travelled beyond these limits also. Here we will endeavour to trace the footsteps of Buddha in the Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh.

In the Janavasabha-Sutta (No. 18) of the Digha-Nikaya, Kuru is mentioned along with the other Janpadas where Tathagata delivered a number of religious discourses. According to the Jatakas, Kuru was 300 leagues in extent and Indapatta[1] (Indra-prastha, near modern Delhi) was its capital. "The ancient Kuru country, according to Dr. B.C. Law, may be said to have comprised the Kurukshetra or Thaneswar. The district included Sonepat, Amin, Panipat, Karnal and was situated between the Sarasvati on the North aad Drishadvati on the South[2]."

Lord Buddha during His visits to the Kuru country generally stayed at Kammasadhamma,

a market town of the Kuru people. The names of the Suttas delivered by the Buddha while at Kammasadhamma are as follows :—

(a) Majjhima Nikaya (Middle Discourses).

(i) Satipatthana Sutta.

Discourse (No. 10) on the Foundations of Mindfulness of the body, feelings, consciousness and mental objects.

(ii) Megandiya Sutta.

Discourse (No. 75) on abandoning sensual desires and craving, with Buddha's account of His abandoning His life of pleasure in the three palaces. After this discourse, Megandiya, a noble of Kammasadhamma, was converted.

(iii) Ananjasappaya Sutta.

Discourse (No. 106) on the various ways of meditating on impassibility and the attainments, and on true release.

(b) Digha Nikaya (Long Discourses).

(i) Maha-Nidana Sutta.

Discourse (No. 15) on the Law of Paticcasamuppada, the doctrine of Dependent Origination.

(ii) Maha-Satipatthana Sutta.

Discourse (No. 22) is the same as Discourse No. 10 in Majjhima Nikaya i.e. on practising the Foundations of Mindfulness but

with the commentary on the Four Noble Truths.

(c) Samyutta Nikaya (Kindred Sayings).

A discourse on the doctrine of Dependent Origination.

(d) Anguttara Nikaya (Gradual Sayings).

A discourse on ten noble states (ariyavasa).

Kammasadhamma, where the Buddha stayed during His sjourn, and which is also mentioned in the Mahasutasana Jataka and the Jayaddisa Jataka as well as in the Divyavadana[3], has not been identified by any scholar. We, however, propose to identify Kammasadhamma with Kaithal, a market town, 38 miles west of Karnal. In Sanskrit, its earlier name was Kapisthala[4], or the abode of monkeys'. May be, the Pali chroniclers changed its name to Kammasadhamma so that it may look dignified. More-over, according to a tradition, it was here that the man-eating ogre, Kammaspada was tamed and civilized by the Bodhisatta[5]. The proposed identification, therefore, seems to be reasonable.

Thullakotthita was another important town of Kuru-Desa. It received its name because of its grannaries. Here, after hearing a discourse of the Buddha, Ratthapala, a Kuru noble, had joined the Buddhist Sangha. His story and his true spirit of self-abnegation is narrated in

the Rattha-pala Sutta (No. 82 of the Majjhima Nikaya). Now a days we are unable to find any town of that name in the Kuru country. In the Buddhist literature, Thuna or Sthuna is said to mark the Western boundry of the Buddhist Majjhimadesa (Middle country). As Hiuen Tsang's account makes Thaneswar the Western most country of the Buddhist Majjhimadesa, S. N. Mazumdar[6] has identified Thuna with Sthaneswar or Thaneswar. Thaneswar is now a Tehsil headquarters in the Karnal District. It is situated on the banks of Sarasvati and is a sacred place for the Hindus. Its name means 'the place of god' (Sthaneshwara). Probably this Sthaneshwara was the town referred to as Thulla-Kotthita (Sthulakoshtita) in the Pali Texts mentioned as the scene of the Discourse No. 82 of the Majjhima Nikaya. Here, Thullakotthita is mentioned as the capital of King Koravya of the Kuru Kingdom with whom Ratthapala (Rashtrapal) held a religious discussion.

That the Buddha had visited some other places in the Punjab as well seems a possibility. According to a tradition which was popular during the reign of Asoka, Lord Buddha, while on a missionary tour of Punjab, had stayed at Srughna (modern Sugh near

Jagadhri), at Kuluta (modern Kulu) and at Taki (modern Asrur in Gujranwala District, West Pakistan). Further, in the last bhanavara or "the portion of tales" of the section on Remedies in the Vinaya it is stated that the Buddha once went from Vaisali to Bhaddiya-nagara and then returned to Savvathi via Anguttarpa, Apana, Kusinara and Atuma. The same travel is related in the Tibetan version of Vinaya of the Mula Sarvastivadins (Dul-va, III. 42 a). In his treatise 'Ancient People of the Punjab' Przyluski has identified[7] Bhaddiyanagara or Bhaddiya with Sakala (Sialkot) and Anguttarapa with Agroha, an ancient city, 13 miles north-west of Hissar. In ancient days there was a great route of commerce which passing through Sialkot, Agroha and Rohtak (Rohitaka) connected Taxila with the Gangetic Valley. The Buddha is said to have travelled by this route.

The Buddha may have visited Taxila also. Commentaries mention that in the Buddha's days also Princes and other eminent men received their training at Takkasila[8] (Taxila) in Punjab. Pasendi, King of Kosala, Mahali, Chief of the Licchavis, and Bandhula, Prince of the Mallas, were classmates in the University of Taxila. Jivaka, Dhammapala of Avanti,

Kanhadinna, Bhardvaja and Yassadatta had also studied at Taxila. Jivaka, one of the foremost physicians of those days and a disciple of the Buddha was personally known to Puskarsari, the King of Gandhara. Again, King Puskarsari (Pukkasati) was a contemporary and a friend of King Bimbisara of Magadha. It is said that once King Puskarsari walked all the way from Taxila to Rajagrha to meet Lord Buddha. The Lord was at that time staying at Sravasti. On knowing the King's mission He hurried to Rajagrha and met Puskarsari at the hermitage of Bhaggava and delivered to him the Dhatuvibhanga Sutta[9]. From all this evidence it can be adduced that the Buddha was aware of the Gandhara region and had even admirers there. Surely someone during the long period of 45 years must have invited Him to visit that country and He must have obliged His disciples including King Puskarsari.

On the basis of whatever little evidence is available at such a distant time, it is clear that the Buddha had sanctified the land of the five rivers. Thus the Punjabis were amongst the direct disciples of the Buddha.

REFERENCES

1. Dr. G.P. Malelasekera, Dictionary of Pali Proper Names, 1960 edition. Volume I, p. 641.
2. B.C. Law, Geography of Early Buddhism, 1932, pp 17-18.
3. Dictionary of Pali Proper Names, Volume I. p. 528.
4. Imperial Gazetteer of India. 1908, Volume XIV, p. 288.
5. Dictionary of Pali Proper Names, Volume I, p. 529.
6. S. N. Mazumdar - Introduction to Cunningham's Geography of Ancient India, 1924, p. iii.
7. J. Przyluski, Ancient Peoples of the Punjab, 1960 edition, p. 9.
8. Dictionary of Pali Proper Names, Volume I, p. 982.
9. Ibid. Volume II, pp. 214-215.

Chapter II

ASOKA'S REIGN

When in 326 B.C. Alexander invaded India, he came into contact with various kings, notable amongst them being King Ambhi of Taxila, and Porus who ruled the territory east of the Indus. Ambhi negotiated peace with Alexander and accorded him a rousing reception at his capital, Taxila. On the other hand, Porus met Alexander on the battle field. He was defeated but was re-instated by Alaxender under dramatic circumstances. Thus, when Alaxender went back in 325 B.C. these two and other petty kings owed allegiance to the Greeks.

Soon after the death of Alexander in 323 B.C., the People of Punjab revolted against the authority of Macedonia. Following the general confusion created by this upsurge, Chandragupta, a competent soldier and organiser, took advantage of the situation and

captured the Greek garrison in the Punjab. Thereafter, with the assistance of some local chiefs in the Punjab, he defeated the last Nanda King of Magadha. Thus in 322 B.C. Chandragupta laid the foundation of the Mauryan Empire. The conquests of the Punjab and Magadha placed at Chandragupta's disposal the best army. With this huge and powerful army he extended the frontiers of his Kingdom. When he died in 298 B.C. his Kingdom extended from the Bay of Bengal to the Arabian Sea and from the Hindu Kush mountain to the Narbada.

Chandragupta was succeeded by his son, Bindusara, who ruled from 298 B.C. to 273 B.C. He conquered the Deccan and added it to the vast empire which he had inherited from his illustrious father. After Bindusara's death in 273 B.C. his son, Asoka, ascended the Magadha throne.

Asoka's coronation took place after four years in 269 B.C. Few years later, he came to the refuge of the Buddha after witnessing large scale massacre in the Kalinga War which he had himself waged in order to annex Kalinga (modern Orissa) to the Mauryan Empire.

Impressed by the rational and humane teachings of the Buddha, Asoka discarded the way of the force and declared his policy of victory through persuation. Consequently, he decided to preach and propagate the glorious doctrine of the Buddha in a systematic manner, and in order to give practical shape to his ideas he convened, at his capital, Pataliputra (Patna), the third Buddhist Council (Sangiti)- the first such Council was held at Rajgriha immediately after the Mahaparinirvana of the Buddha and the second after about 100 years at Vaisali. After the Council, Asoka sent missionaries to preach the Gospel of the Buddha to various territories and countries, both within and outside his Kingdom. Amongst these pious missionaries were Majjhantaka and Maharakkhita who were commissioned to preach Buddhism in the Gandhara and Yona region (Greek settlements in North-West India) respectively. To supplement the efforts of the missionaries, Asoka undertook, on a vast scale, the construction of the stupas and monasteries throughout his Kingdom. He also issued a number of Pillar and Rock Edicts. In this compaign of 'Dhamma Vijaya' Punjab seems to have received special attention of Asoka.

Hiuen Tsang, the Chinese pilgrim, who was in India from 630 to 644 A.C. saw the Asokan pillars or stupas at the following five place in the Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh :

	Place	Identification
1.	Satadru	Modern Sirhind (Punjab).
2.	Sathanesvara	Modern Thanesar (Haryana).
3.	Srughna	Modern Sugh near Jagadhri (Haryana).
4.	Kuluta	Modern Kulu (Himachal Pradesh).
5.	Tamsavana	Modern Sultanpur or Raghunathpur (Himachal Pradesh).

The selection of the sites for these stupas was not arbitrary. Asoka raised these memorials at the places which were traditionally connected with the life-events of Gautama the Buddha, His past lives and the life-events of the past Buddhas. According to Hiuen Tsang :

1. The Stupa at Sirhind was near the place where the Past Four Buddhas sat and walked[1]'.

2. The Stupa at Thanesar contained 'relics of the Buddha and frequently emitted a brilliant light[2]'.

3. The Stupa at Sugh was built by Asoka at the place where 'the Tathagata preached the law to convert men[3].'

4. The Stupa at Kulu 'was a memorial of the traces of Buddha's visit to Kulu[4]'.

5. The Stupa at Sultanpur was built 'near the site of the traces of the Past Four Buddhas where they sat and walked[5]'.

As the seat of the Mauryan viceroyalty in Punjab was at Takshasila (Taxila), the Western Punjab now included in Pakistan, naturally claimed a major share of the Buddhist buildings built during the reign of Asoka. Hiuen Tsang saw the Asokan stupas at : Narasinha (modern Ran-Si, 25 miles to the west of Lahore) ; Taki (modern Asrur in Gujranwala District). Sakala (modern Sialkot) ; Simhapura (modern Ketas, 16 miles from Pid Dadan Khan) ; Manikyala (24 miles south-east of Taxila) ; and two stupas at Takshasila (modern Taxila).

Of all the Asokan monuments in the Punjab, the most important was the Dharmarajika Stupa at Taxila. Asoka, it appears, built this stupa over the body-relics of the Buddha which were allotted to Punjab after Asoka opened the seven Stupas built over the holy

relics by the contemporaries of the Buddha, and distributed the relics throughout his kingdom. Two relic caskets have since been discovered from the vicinity of the Dharma-rajika Stupa.

Of the numerous Pillar Edicts issued by Asoka, at least one Major Pillar Edict was in the plains of Punjab. This pillar was at Topra, a village near Ambala from where it was removed by Feroz-Shah Tughlaq in 1356 A.C. to Delhi. It now stands on the ruins of Feroz-Shah Kotla, and is known as Delhi-Topra Pillar. The seven edicts on this pillar were inscribed in 243 B.C. and deal with the following subjects :—

Edict No.	Subject.
I	Exhortation of the practice of Dharma.
II	What constitutes the practice of Dharma.
III	Exhortation on vigilance against sin.
IV	The duties of the Rajjukas.
V	Prohibition of the killing of and infliction of pain on animals.
VI	Asoka's object in writing the Dharma rescripts.
VII	Review of Asoka's life-long activities.

Out of the seven Edic's, the first six Edicts are similar to the Edicts inscribed on the Delhi-Meerut, Lauriya-Araraj, Lauriya-Nandangarh and Rampurva pillars but Edict No. VII is found only on this pillar and no where else. The seventh Edict on the Punjab Pillar is unique in the sense that it not only reviews Asoka's life-long activities for the weal and welfare of his subjects, but also throws valuable light on the ways and means adopted by Asoka for preaching and propagating the Noble Teachings of the Buddha. Inter-alia, the Edict says :

"Thus saith king Priyadarsi, Beloved of the Gods.

Whatever good deeds I have performed, those the people have imitated and to those they are conforming. Thereby they have progressed and will progress further in respect of obedience to mother and father, obedience to elders, courtesy to the Brahmanas and Sramanas, to the poor and the distressed and even to slaves and servants.

This progress of Dharma among men has been promoted by me only in two ways, viz. by imposing restrictions in accordance with the principles of Dharma and by exhortation.

But, of these two, the restrictions relating to Dharma are of little consequence. By exhortation, however, Dharma has been promoted considerably. The restrictions relating to Dharma are, indeed, such as have been enjoined by me, viz. that certain animals are exempt from slaughter, and also the numerous other restrictions relating to Dharma that I have imposed.

The progress of Dharma among men has, indeed, been promoted by me considerably by exhortation in regard to the abstention from hurting any living being and abstention from killing any animal".

The creation of so many viharas, stupas and other monuments during the reign of Asoka the Great gave a great fillip to the spread of Buddhism in the Punjab. In fact, the unprecedented activities in the cause of the Dhamma created a stir in the land of the five rivers which resulted in the advent of renowned Buddhist scholars and philosophers in the following centuries.

During the reign of Asoka and immediately thereafter, there also flourished a local Buddhist kingdom in Punjab with Srughna, modern

Sugh, near Jagadhri in the district of Ambala, as its capital city, and covering an area of about 1000 miles in circuit. Raja Dhanabhuti, the pre-eminent king of this royal family ruled from 240 B.C. to 210 B.C. This pious Buddhist king, apart from building magnificient stupas in his capital city, also made munificient donations to the world famous Stupa of Bharhut in Central India which was constructed sometime between 250 B.C. and 200 B.C. According to an inscription discovered at Bharhut, Raja Dhanabhuti had borne the entire cost of the East Gateway of the Stupa. Most probably he was the donor of the other three Gateways also. According to Cunningham, the inscription[6] on the East Gateway reads as follows, after restoration :

> "This ornamental gateway has been erected by the king of Srughna, Dhanabhuti, born of (the queen of) of the Vatsa family, (and) son of Aga-raja, born of (the queen of) the Gota family, (and) grandson of king (Visa Deva), born of (the queen of) the Gageya race, and spiritual merit has been gained (thereby)."

Inspired by Asoka, Raja Dhanabhuti also raised a number of stupas in and around

his capital, Sugh. Hiuen Tsang, who visited Sugh in 635 A.C. saw there, besides an Asokan Stupa, a number of stupas having body relics of the Buddha, Sariputta and Moggallana-His two chief disciples, and other great Arhats. The ruins of one of these stupas have recently been discovered, by Devendra Handa of the Kurukshetra University, at Chaneti, a small village situated about 3 km. east of Jagadhri, and nearly the same distance north-west of Sugh or Srughna. According to him, the Chaneti Stupa was built during the reign of Raja Dhanabhuti. Summing up his observations, he says[7]," Our Chaneti Stupa must have been one of those 'tens of topes' which were erected in Dhanabhuti's time in and around the capital city. The yellowish-red colour of of the bricks which is typical of the Mauryan period and the plain, square and large-sized bricks 30x30x7 cms. corresponding with those used in the construction of the Bharhut Stupa lend further support to our surmise that this Stupa was erected sometime during the reign of king Dhanabhuti who ruled from 240 B.C. to 210 B C.".

Raja Dhanabhuti was succeeded by his son, Vadha Pala in 210 B.C., and he in turn was

succeeded by his son, Dhanabhuti II, in about 180 B.C. That this royal family continued to donate liberally to the Buddhist shrines outside Punjab is evident from the two other inscriptions found at Bharhut and Mathura. According to the 2nd Bharhut inscription[8], the Railings of that Stupa were the gift of Raja Dhanabhuti's son, Prince Vadha Pala. It says : "Dhanabhuti rajano putasa kumarasa Vadha Palasa (danam)". According to the Mathura inscription[9], "the gift of Dhanabhuti II at Mathura included a **Vedika** or open building for reading, a Torana or ornamental gateway, and a Ratnagriha or treasury".

REFERENCES

1. Samuel Beal, Chinese Accounts of India-Travels of Hiuen Tsang-1957, Volume II, p. 21.
2. Ibid., p. 217.
3. Ibid., p. 218.
4. Ibid., p. 210.
5. Ibid., p. 208.
6. Alexander Cunningham, The Stupa of Bharhut : A Buddhist Monument, 1962 edition, p. 129.
7. Devendra Handa, A Mauryan Stupa at Cheneti, an article published in the Vishveshvaranand Indological Journal (Hoshiarpur) Vol. IV, Pt. (i) ; March, 1966.
8. Alexander Cunningham, The Stupa of Bharhut, 1962 edition, p. 142.
9. Ibid., p.p. 15-16.

Chapter III

MILINDA AND NAGASENA

After Asoka's death in 232 B.C., the well-knit Mauryan Empire began gradually to decline, partly due to the Brahmanic re-action against it and partly due to the incompetency of the successors of Asoka. The final blow to it was struck by the treacherous Pushyamitra Sunga, Army Chief of the last Maurya King, Brihadartha, who assassinated his master in 184 or 185 B.C. and usurped the throne of Pataliputra.

Soon after the collapse of the Mauryan Empire, Demetrius, a Bactarian Greek, invaded India. Demetrius was accompanied by two competent commanders, namely, Appllodotus and Menander. After conquering Gandhara and Taxila, Demetrius is stated to have stayed back at Taxila but Appllodotus and Menander marched forward towards Ujjeni (Ujjain) and Pataliputra (Patna) respectively. Menander

reached and occupied Pataliputra probably in 175 B.C. The occupation of Pataliputra was, however, short-lived and Menander after his retreat from there made Sagala (Sialkot) as his headquarters. Demetrius died in 166 B.C., and Apollodotus, who was a near relation of the King died in 161 B.C. After his death, Menander carved out a kingdom in the Punjab. Thus from 161 B.C. onward Menander was the ruler of Punjab till his death in about 145[1] B.C. or 130[2] B.C.

The kingdom of Menander included Gandhara, Sind and Punjab. In and around this territory, a large number of Menander's coins have since been discovered. Sagala or Sakala (modern Sialkot), an old and historic city, was the capital of Menander. Sagala is well-known in the Buddhist literature and has been mentioned in the oldest Buddhist Scriptures, namely, Therigatha (Psalms of the Sisters) and Theragatha (Psalms of the Brethern). Hiuen Tsang here saw two stupas created by Asoka, one of them commemorated the place where the Buddha is said to have stopped while on a missionary tour of Punjab.

Apart from being a competent soldier and warrior, Menander or Milinda was a scholar of

distinction and was anxious to understand the essence of the religions of India, his new home. With this object in view, he approached many Indian teachers but none could satisfy his curious mind. So he was disheartened and exclaimed ! 'All India is an empty thing, it is verily like chaff. There is no one capable of discussing things with me and dispelling my doubts". Under such circumstances, the King one day per chance saw a Buddhist monk, named Nagasena, passing nearby his palace. Milinda was very much impressed and attracted by the calm and serene personality of Nagasena. He summoned the monk to his court and questioned him about the religion to which he belonged. In a calm and scholastic atmosphere, this discussion commenced and lasted for many days. After Nagasena had solved a number of dilemmas and problems put by the King, Milinda became a Buddhist devotee. The record of the Dialogue between him and Nagasena is known as 'Milinda-Panho'. It is divided into seven parts and contains 304 questions of king Milinda which cover almost all aspects of Buddhism. The Milinda-Panho (Questions of Milinda) has the highest place in the non-canonical Buddhist literature.

After conversion to Buddhism, Milinda became an ardent champion of the Buddhist cause. He built a large monastery named Milinda-Vihara[3] at Sialkot for the residence of Venerable Nagasena and his colleagues. He also made substantial donations to the Sangha in other places. According to the Shinkot inscription, Milinda 'helped in the propagation of Buddhism'. From Shinkot in Bajaur (the frontier province of Gandhara in those days) a relic casket[4] has also been discovered. This casket has an incription in Kharoshthi by the dedicator, an Indian Buddhist named Vijayamitra, who lived during the reign of Milinda. That Milinda was a devout Buddhist is further proved by some of his coins which bear the Wheel of Law (Dharma-Chakra)[5] of the Buddhists.

In the Buddhist lore, the names of Milinda and Nagasena always go together. In modern times too, the philosopher king and his preceptor have been honoured together by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, the greatest modern Buddhist missionary, who in 1951 established the famous Milinda Maha Vidyalaya at Aurangabad (Maharashtra) and named its vast campus as the Nagasena-Vana.

After the disappearance of the Greek rule in about 100 B.C., Punjab was divided into small independent principalities or kingdoms of the local peoples. Important amongst them were : the Audumbaras, Trigartas, Kunindas, Yaudheyas and Arjunayanas. The Audumbaras ruled the country on the Upper Beas between Gurdaspur and Hoshiarpur districts with their capital perhaps near about Pathankot. The Trigartas ruled the area between the Ravi and Sutlej with Jullundur as centre. The Kunindas had sway over the areas between the Sutlej (Ludhiana) and the Yamuna (Saharanpur) with their capital at Sugh near Ambala. The Yaudheyas ruled the territory southward of the Kunindas with perhaps Sonepat as centre.

Though we do not know much about others but it can be said with some certainty that the Audumbaras and the Kunindas were Buddhists. The Audumbaras find mention in the Buddhist Texts. In the Tibetan version of the Vinaya of the Mula Sarvastivadins, the capital of the Audumbaras is noted as the citadel of Buddhism in the north-western region. According to Przyluski, the Audumbaras had 'attained a sufficiently high degree of culture and material prosperity before the beginning

of the Christian era and were among the champions of Buddhism in the eastern region[6]. Some of the coins of the Audumbaras, which have been unearthed at Rupar, have the Buddhist stupa[7] embossed over them.

The Kunindas have been indentified by Cunningham with the royal family of Srughana (Sugh) by the line of Raja Dhana-bhuti noticed by us in the previous chapter. His view is based on the coins of the king Amoga-bhuti[8], who calls himself as 'king of the Kunindas', which have been found in abundance around Sugh, particularly along the Upper Jamuna. The identification of the Kunindas is further supported by the discovery of the coins at Sugh of Aga-Raja, father of Raja Dhanabhuti I, and Raja Bala-bhuti who was most probably a later member of the same dynasty. The Kunindas have since been identified with the Kanets of the high hills of Himachal Pradesh, where, it is said, they were driven up by the advancing wave of immigration. According to Cunningham[9], "the Kunindas or Kulindas, as the name is also written, are now represented by the Kanets, who form nearly two thirds of the population of the hill tracts between the Bias and Tons Rivers.

The name of Kunawar (Kinnaur) is derived from them; but there can be little doubt that Kunawar must have included the whole of Ptolemy's Kulindrine as the Kanets now number nearly 400,000 persons or rather more than sixty percent of the whole population between the Bias and Tons Rivers They form 58 per cent in Kulu; 67 per cent in the states round about Simla, and 62 per cent in Kunawar (Kinnaur). They are very numerous in Sirmor and Bisahar (Bashar), and there are still considerable number of them below the hills, in the districts of Ambala, Karnal and Ludhiana". It is significant that a good number of Kanets in the districts of Kinnaur, Kangra (Kulu) and Lahul even to-day profess Buddhism.

REFERENCES

1. W. W. Tarn, The Greeks in Bactaria and India, 1951, p. 226.
2. A. K. Narain, The Indo-Greeks, 1957, p. 100.
3. Publications Division, 2500 Years of Buddhism, 1956, p. 198.
4. Tarn, The Greeks in Bactaria and India, p. 520.
5. Ibid., p. 407.
6. J. Przyluski, Ancient Peoples of the Punjab, 1960 edition, p. 9.
7. Tarn, The Greeks in India, p. 239.
8. Alexander Cunningham, The Stupa of Bharhut; A Buddhist Monument, 1962 edition, pp 16-17.
9. Ibid., p. 17. Also see Cunningham's Report of a tour in the Punjab, 1878-79, Vol. XIV, Archaeological Survey of India, p. 126.

Chapter IV

KANISHKA

In about 80 B.C., Sakas appeared on the political scene of India. The first Saka chief to invade and conquer a large part of Punjab and Gandhara was Maues or Mauakes (in Kharoshthi, Mao or Moga). Maues, who later embraced Buddhism, was the first King in India to issue coins with the Buddha figure[1]. Maues died in 58 B.C. and was succeeded by Azes I. Thereafter, Punjab was for some time ruled by the Saka Satraps, notable amongst them being Hagamasha, Hagana and Rajuvala or Rajula.

In the footsteps of the Sakas, came the Kushanas. The first Kushana chief was Kadphises I who, in about 25 A.C. occupied Gandhara by displacing the last Greek King, Hermacus. As is evident from his coins discovered from Taxila, Kadphises I was a Buddhist. Apart from the Buddha figure, his coins bear the inscription[2] in Kharoshthi

script 'Dharma-Thidasa or Sacca - Thidasa' which means who is steadfast in Dhamma or true Dhamma. Kadphises I was the grand father of Kanishka who laid the firm foundation of the Kushana rule in India.

Prior to Kanishka, the Kushana rule was confined on the Indian side to Gandhara only. In 78 A.C., however, Kanishka extended his kingdom upto Bihar in the east and upto Konkan in the south. Kanishka's capital was Purushapur, modern Peshawar. This great Buddhist king reigned from 78 to 101 A.C. Like Asoka, Kanishka too undertook the propagation of Buddhism in India and outside India with the zeal and zest of a missionary. In other words, he completed Asoka's work and helped in the triumphant spread of the Buddha-Dhamma throughout Asia. In the first century A.C. Buddhism in India was passing through a change. The literary activities of the distinguished Buddhist writers like Ashvaghosha, Vasumitra, and Parsva were transforming it into Mahayana. Kanishka was attracted by the new form of Buddhism in the making. To give impetus to it, he convened the fourth Buddhist Council. The fourth Council was presided over by Vasumitra. Ashvaghosha was its Vice-President. Five hundred Bhikkhus

took part in the proceedings of this Council and arranged the doctrines of Buddhism and wrote commentaries in Sanskrit on them. The commentaries known as the Vibhasa Sastras covered all the three Pitakas (Baskets) of the Buddhist Canon. According to Hiuen Tsang[3], the Council composed 100,000 stanzas of Upadesa-sastras explaining the canonical sutras, 100,000 stanzas of the Vinaya-vibhasa - sastras explaining the Vinaya, and 100,000 stanzas of the Abhidharma-vibhasa-sastras explaining the Abhidharma. The Mahavibhasa,which is still preserved in Chinese, perhaps represents the commentaries compiled by the fourth Buddhist Council.

As to where the Council convened by Kanishka was held is controversial. According to some it was held in Kashmir, while according to others it was held at the Kuvana monastery at Jalandhara (Jullundur). The Distt. Gazetteer[4] states as follows : 'The earliest historical mention of Jullundur occurs in the reign of Kanishka, the Kushna, who ruled from Kabul to the present U.P. There met, at his instigation, at Kuvana, near Jullundur about 100 A.D. a Council of Buddhist teachers, which

set itself the task of collecting and arranging the sacred writings of Buddhism'. Hiuen Tsang who recorded in the 7th century A.C. the traditional account of Buddhism in India states that it was held in Kashmir. But the claim of Jalandhara as its venue seems to be well-founded. The account of this Council is found in many works composed much earlier than the Chinese pilgrim's visit. On that basis, eminent scholars like Dr. Radhakrishnan[5], Grunwedel[6] and Wadell[7] have accepted Jullundur as the venue of this Council. The authorities which maintain that it was held in Kashmir say that Jullundur was first contemplated by Kanishka but was later on rejected on account of its heat and damping atmosphere. This is not a very valid reason for changing the venue as it could have been held during winter months. If at all the venue was changed later, it was probably shifted to Tamsavana monastery[8], where, according to Nundo Lal Dey, the 4th Buddhist Synod was held. The Tamsavana convent was at modern Sultanpur or Raghunathpur at the confluence of Bias and Serheri. It is just about 25 miles north-east from Jullundur city. The famous scholar Katyayana[9], whose Abhidharmajnana-Prasthana

Sastra was discussed by this Council, belonged to this monastery.

After this Council, Kanishka undertook systematic missionary work. Due to his initiative, guidance and patronage, not only Buddhism became more popular and deep rooted in the land of its birth but it was also successfully introduced into Central Asia and China. Also, the figures of the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas began to appear under the influence of the Gandhara art.

Kanishka, like Asoka, founded many monasteries, chaityas and stupas. Though the monuments created by him were scattered throughout his kingdom, the main stupas and viharas were at his capital, Peshawar, at Taxila and in Kashmir. The Great Tope (Stupa) at Peshawar erected by Kanishka, was visited by Hiuen Tsang in 630 A.C. According to him, it was 400 feet in height, in addition to its base which was in five stages and 150 feet high. The ruins of this stupa have been identified with the ruins known as 'Shah-ji-ki-dheri' near Ganj Gate on the south-eastern out-skirts of Peshawar. The site was excavated in 1908-9 and one of the discoveries was the famous 'Kanishka Casket'. The casket which

contained the holy relics of the Buddha was deposited by Kanishka himself. The reliquary has on its lid "a seated Buddha fllanked by two Bodhisattvas. In relief round the upper part of the cylinder is a frieze of flying geese; below is the main frieze with a figure of King Kanishka standing in front of an undulating garland supported by erotes and framing demi-figures of votaries. On the lid and sides is a punctured inscription in Kharoshthi which twice mentions the name of Kanishka and concludes with the name of the master-mason : The servant Agisala, the overseer of works at Kanishka's vihara in the sangharama of Mahasena[10]". This relic-casket is now the proud possession of Burma.

Kanishka must have raised religious buildings at other places like Jullundur and Sialkot also but the spade of the archaeologist has not brought to light any such thing. Apparently, the buildings in these places were not so massive and magnificient, and they could not withstand the ravages of time, weather and man.

The Kushana rulers continued to rule over North India upto the end of the 2nd century A D. Important kings after Kanishka belonging

to this royal house were : Kanishka II, Huvishka and Vasudeva. During their reign also the religion of the Buddha continued to flourish in the Punjab.

One of the greatest events in the history of Buddhism in India took place in the latter half of the 2nd century A.D. This was the construction of the Great Maha Bodhi Temple at Bodh Gaya on the remains of the original temple built by Asoka. Significantly enough, the Great Temple, which is standing even to-day, was built with liberal donations from Huvishka, the second successor of Kanishka. As an evidence[11] for this histroic event, we have an inscription at Bodh Gaya which records the construction of the Maha Bodhi Temple in the reign of Huvishka. The discovery of a gold coin of Huvish a amongst the Relics deposited in front of the Vajrasana Throne, along with some silver punch-marked coins, also lends credence to this view.

REFERENCES

1. W.W. Tarn, The Greeks in India, 1951, p. 400.
2. Bapat, 2500 years of Buddhism, 1956, p. 199.
3. Samuel Beal, Chinese Accounts of India (Travels of Hiuen Tsang), 1958, Volume II, pp. 193-194.
4. Punjab District Gazetteers, Volume XIV, Jullundur District, 1908, p. 22.
5. S. Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, Volume I, 1951 edition, p. 584.
6. Grunwedel, Buddhist Art in India, p. 79.
7. Wadell, Buddhism in Tibet, p. 9.
8. Nando Lal Dey, The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Medieval India, 1927 edition, p. 202.
9. Ibid., p. 202.
10. Wheeler, Five Thousand years of Pakistan, 1950, p. 48.
11. Sir A. Cunningham, Maha Bodhi or The Great Buddhist Temple at Bodh Gaya, 1965 edition, pp. 2 & 58.

Chapter V

ASANGA AND VASUBANDHU

After the collapse of the Kushana Empire towards the close of the 2nd century A.D., we enter upon a dark period in Indian history which continued till the rise of the Gupta Empire about two centuries later. The founder of the Gupta Empire was Chandragupta, who was originally a petty chieftain in Bihar but later on expanded his dominions to include the whole of Bihar and some part of Bengal. He proclaimed himself in 320 A.C. as 'Maharaja-dhiraja', King of Kings. On his death in 330, Chandragupta was succeeded by his son, Samudragupta who ruled upto 380. Samudragupta extended his Kingdom on all sides and included in it a large part of Punjab as well. Though a Hindu, Samudragupta had as his adviser the famous Buddhist saint and philosopher of Punjab, Vasubandhu. After his father's death, Chandragupta II succeeded Samudragupta and assumed the title of Vikramaditya 'Sun of Valour'. Vasubandhu continued to be his adviser also. Vasubandhu's association with this royal house was, it seems,

helpful in bringing the Gupta Kings closer to Buddhism. Atleast two of the latter Gupta Kings were devout Buddhists. They were : Buddhagupta who succeeded in 480 and Narasimhagupta or Baladitya who ascended the throne in about 500 A.C.

Asanga was the elder brother of Vasubandhu. Both were born at Peshawar and educated in Kashmir. To begin with, both the brothers belonged to the Sarvastivada school of Buddhism which was dominent in the Punjab in those days. Later, in about 400 A.C. Asanga became a pupil of Maitreyanatha, the founder of the Yogacara or the Vijnanvada (consciousness only) school. Afterwards Vasubandhu also became an admirer of this school.

Both Asanga and Vasubandhu were authors of distinction and they wrote masterly expositions on the Buddhist theories and practices. The most important works of Asanga were : 'The Mahayana - samparigraha, the Prakarna-aryavaca, the Yogacarabhumi-sastra and the Mahayana-sutralankara. The last two works are most important from the ethical and doctrinal points of view.

Vasubandhu's most important work was

the Abhidharma Kosa. This grand work of 600 Karikas proved invaluable for the propagation of Buddhism in India and abroad. In India, it was so popular that in the 7th century, Bana, while describing the hermitage of the Buddhist monk, Divakaramitra, says, in Harsha-carita that, "Even some monkeys who had fled to the three Refuges (the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha) were gravely busy performing the ritual of the caitya, while some devout parrots, skilled in the Sakya Sastras, were explaining the Kosa[1] (Abhidharma Kosa)". Yasomitra who wrote a commentary on Vasubandhu's Abhidharma-Kosa, says, that, on account of his spiritual attainments, Vasubandhu was known as a second Buddha by his contemporaries. "Yam Buddhimatm agrayam dvitiya - miva Buddham ityahuh[2]". Besides the Abhidharma-Kosa, Vasubandhu wrote the Paramartha-sartha-saptati, an attack on the philosophy of the Sankhya teacher, Vindhyavasi, who was a contemporary of Vasubandhu. According to Hiuen Tsang, Vasubandhu composed Paramartha - saptati (Paramarthasatya Sastra) while he was staying at Sakala[3] (Sialkot). Vasubandhu also wrote commentaries on the Saddharma-pundarika Sutra, the Mahaparinirvana Sutra and the Vajracchedika prajana - paramita. His other

works of distinction were on logic, namely, the Tarka Sastra and the Vada Vidhi.

That Buddhism was quite flourishing in the Punjab at the time Asanga and Vasubandhu lived has been testified by Fa-Hian, the first Buddhist pilgrim from China who was in India from 399-414 A.C. According to his estimates, there were at that time as many as ten thousand Buddhist monks in the Punjab. Summing up his observations, Fa-Hian says[4] : "Here the Faith is very flourishing under both the Greater and Lesser Vehicles. When the people of the country saw Buddhist priests from China coming among them, they were much affected and said, "How is it possible for foreigners to know that renunciation of family is the essence of our religion, and to travel afar in search of the Faith ?" Then they gave to the pilgrims whatsoever they required, and treated them in accordance with the Faith".

REFERENCES

1. Bana, Harsha-Carita, Translated by E.B. Cowell & F.W. Thomas, 1961, p. 236.
2. Bapat, 2500 years of Buddhism, p. 284.
3. Beal, Travels of Hiuen Tsang, Volume II, p. 206.
4. H.A. Giles, The Travels of Fa-Hsian, 1956 edition, pp. 19-20.

Chapter VI

HARSHA

The first half of the 6th century A.D. saw the disintegration of the Gupta Empire. Taking advantage of the slackening grip of the latter Gupta Kings, some of the local chieftains carved out Independent States. Two of such powers were, the Maukharis of Kanauj and the Vardhana dynasty of Thanesvar. Kanauj or Kanyakubja (city of dwarfs) is in the Farrukhabad District of Uttar Pradesh and was on the right bank of the Ganges in its prosperous days. The river now flows at a distance of few miles to the east of Kanauj. Thanesar is now a Tehsil headquarters in the Karnal District of Haryana.

The first powerful ruler of the Vardhana Dynasty of Thanesar was Prabhakaravardhana (583-605 A.D.) who, to begin with, was a petty chief of the district of Sthanesvara (Thanesar) but became a powerful king by subduing the adjoining territories. As a result of his conquests in the four directions, Prabhakara-vardhana was known as 'Maharajadhiraja'

whereas his father Adityavardhana and grandfather Rajyavardhana I were simply called Maharajas. Prabhakaravardhana had two sons, Rajyavardhana and Harshavardhana, and a daughter, Rajyasri. In the Madhuban inseription, Rajyavardhana is described as a 'most devout worshipper of Sugata[1] (Buddha)'. Similar is true of both Harsha and Rajyasri as well.

In 605, while Rajyavardhana, eldest son of Prabhakaravardhana, was fighting in the battle-field against the Huns, the king passed away. Though Rajyavardhana was victorious, he returned home dejected due to the injuries and arrow wounds he received in the battle-field and disappointed due to the sudden demise of his father. Harsha and his elder brother were still mourning the death of their beloved father when suddenly a courier gave the tragic news of the assassination of their brother-in-law, Grahavarman, the king of Kanauj, and the imprisonment of their sister Rajyasri at the hands of the Hindu king of Malwa. On hearing this sad news, Rajyavardhana rushed with his army to rescue Rajyasri.

Rajyavardhana was able to defeat the King of Malwa but he fell into a trap of Sasanka,

Brahmin king of Gauda(Bengal), an ally of the Malwa king. He offered Rajyavardhana the hand of his daughter as a token of submission and friendship and called him to a meeting. When Rajyavardhana came to the meeting he was treacherously assassinated by the Gauda King. Thus, almost in quick succession Harsha, who was barely 16 at that time, lost his father, his brother-in-law and his brother. Not only that, the honour and life of his sister was also in peril. The young Buddhist prince, therefore, flared up and took a vow to punish the murderer of his brother and brother-in-law. So he rushed with his army to Kanauj. On the way, Harsha got the news that Rajyasri had been released and had entered the Vindhya forest. Hence, he changed his plans and turned to the Vindhya forest in search of Rajyasri. There he met by chance Bikhshu Divakaramitra, an old friend of the deceased Grahvarman. With his help, Harsha was able to trace Rajyasri when she was just going to end her life by mounting the funeral pier. After rescuing Rajyasri, Harsha turned towards Kanauj. On reaching Kanauj, he found that Sasanka had in fear beat a retreat and the Malwa king had no courage to try strength. Thus he was able to retake Kanauj with ease.

Harsha was a great conquerer. After uniting the Thanesvar kingdom (southern Punjab and eastern Rajputana) and the Kanauj kingdom (which probably touched Thanesvar kingdom on the West, Nalanda on the East, Tarai on the North and present boundry of U.P. on the South), he managed to extend his hold over Eastern Punjab, whole of the present U.P., Bihar, Bengal and Orissa. In addition, many a smaller royal houses of Northern India were paying him tributes Thus, almost the entire North and North-Eastern India was directly or indirectly under the influence of Harsha.

During the reign of Harsha, the celebrated Chinese pilgrim, Hiuen Tsang (Yuan Chwang) visited India. He reached Peshawar in November 630 A.D. and stayed in India till July 644 Since Hiuen Tsang came by land route and went back also by the same route, he twice passed through Punjab. We give below the chronology of his travels in ancient Punj.b on the basis of the itinerary prepared by Sir Alexander Cunningham[2]:

Date	Place
631 A.D.	
April 10	Taxila
June 15	Kashmir
633	
October 1	Leaves Kashmir
633	
November 10	Tseka or Taki (Asrur)
November 15	Sakala or Sagala (Sialkot)
November 25	Lahore or Kasur
634	
January 1	Chinapati (Patti)
635	
March 15	Jalandhara (Jullundur)
August 1	Kuluta (Kulu)
September 10	Satadru (Sirhind)
October 25	Sthaneswara (Thanesar)
November 1	Srughna (Sugh)
643	
September 20	Jalandhara
December 15	Taxila

Hiuen Tsang was a keen observer and has left for us very valuable account about the places he visited during his sjourn in India. Let us recapitulate what this scholar-pilgrim saw and noted about the condition of Buddhism in the area covered by modern

Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh:

Chinapati[3] **:**—'This country is 2000 li in circuit. The capital is about 14 to 15 li round...... The people are contented and peaceful; there are amongst them believers and the contrary. There are ten sangharamas'.

Comments[4] **:**—From Sialkot, Hiuen Tsang came to Chinapati via Lahore or Kasur where he had stayed for one month. Chinapati (so known because it was the winter residence of Kanishka's Chinese hostages) has been indentified with modern Patti in Amritsar District. Here the pilgrim stayed for fourteen months, from January 634 to March 635 with a view to study Abhidharama Sastra from a famous savant, Vinitaprabha[5], who had himself composed commentaries on Pancaskandha-Sastra and Vidyamatrasiddhi-Tridasa-Sastra.

Tamsavana[6] **:**—'To the south-east of the capital (Patti) 500 li or so, we come to the convent called Tamsavana. There are about 300 priests in it who study the doctrine of the Sarvastivada School. They have a dignified address and are of conspicous virtue and pure life. Three hundred years after the Nirvana

of Buddha the master of Sastras called Katyayana composed here the Abhidharma-jnana-prasthana-sastra.

Comments :—Tamsavana or 'Darkness wood' has been identified with Sultanpur in the Kulu Valley, situated at the confluence of Bias and Serhari. According to Cunningham, the whole of the western Doab-i-Jalandharpitha was covered with a thick jungle from which the monastery took its name. It is also called Raghunathpur. The monastery at Sultanpur must have been an important seat of Buddhism as Asoka had invited some monks from here to participate in the third Buddhist Council held at Pataliputra. Around this monastery were innumerable stupas, and, according to Hiuen Tsang, some of them contained the relics of the Buddha. The scholar-monk Katyayana referred to by Hiuen Tsang flourished in the first century A. C. His work was discussed at the fourth Buddhist Council held under the aegis of Kaniska.

Jalandhara[7] :—This Kingdom is about 1000 li from east to west, and about 800 li from north to south. The capital is 12 or 13 li in circuit... The people are brave and impetuous.

The houses are rich and well supplied. **There are fifty convents or so: about 2000 priests'.**

Comments :—The city of Jalandhara visited by Hiuen Tsang in 635 A.D. was the modern Jullundur. Even at that time it was a large city, 2 miles in circuit, and was the capital of the Julandhara kingdom, also known as Trigartta. Apart from the modern district of Jullundur, this kingdom also included the modern districts of Hoshiarpur and Kangra and the states of Chamba, Mandi and Suket. The king of the Jalandhara kingdom was a Buddhist and an ally of Harsha. According to Hiuen Tsang, his name was Wu-ti-to (Wuddhi or Udito). Harsha was much pleased by his devotion to the Buddha - Dhamma and had given him sole control of matters relating to Buddhism even in his own kingdom. While at Jullundur, Hiuen Tsang was treated as a State Guest by king Udito. When on his way back he passed through Jullundur in 643 A. D. Harsha had charged king Udito to conduct the pilgrim in safety to the frontiers.

Of the 50 monasteries seen by our pilgrim, one was known as Nagardhana. Ven. Chandravarma[8], a famous Buddhist scholar, of those times resided in this vihara. Hiuen

Tsang stayed with for four months and studied with him commentary known as Prakarana-Pada-vibhasa-sastra. As already noticed Jullundur was an important seat of Buddhism as early as the first century A.D. and, according to some sources, the Buddhist Council convened by Kanishka was held at Kuvana vihara, near this city.

Kuluta[9] **:**—'This country is about 300 li in circuit and surrounded on every side by mountains. The chief town is about 14 or 15 li round...... The people are coarse and common in appearance. Their nature is hard and fierce. They greatly regard justice and bravery. **There are about twenty sangharamas and 1000 priests or so'.**

Comments : – Kuluta is the modern city of Kulu and the areas around in the upper valley of the Beas river. In this valley is a celebrated place of pilgrimage, Trilokanath (Trailokya-nath) situated on a hill in the village Tunda on the left bank of the Chandra-bhaga (Chenab) river. It contains an image of Avalokitesvara[10] Bodhisattva, with six hands now worshipped as an image of Mahadeva. Lord Buddha is said to have come here and converted a Yaksha who later on built a monastery. In

earlier times here was a stupa called the chi-chi-tope which contained a relic[11] of the Buddha. Asoka had also erected here a stupa which was still intact when Hiuen Tsang visited Kulu in August 635.

Satadru[12] **:**—'This country is about 2000 li from east to west and borders on a great river. The capital is 17 or 18 li in circuit...... The manners of the people are soft and agreeable, the men are docile and virtuous. **They all sincerely believe in the law of the Buddha and show it great respect. Within and without the royal city there are ten sangharamas, but the halls are now deserted and cold, and there are but few priests'.**

Comments :—Satadru was another name of the river Sutlej and in olden days also denoted a kingdom, the capital of which has been identified with Sirhind near Ambala. Here Asoka had also constructed a stupa which was still standing at the time of Hiuen Tsang's visit.

Sthanesvara[13] **:**—'This kingdom is about 7000 li in circuit, the capital 20 li or so ..... The manners of the people are cold and sincere. The families are rich and given to exessive

luxury. Most of the people follow after worldly gains, a few give themselves to agricultural pursuits. There is a large accumulation here of rare and valuable merchandise from every quarter. **There are three sangharamas in this country with about 700 priests'.**

Comments:—Sthanesvara(modern Thanesar) was the capital of the Vardhana Dynasty till Harsha transfered his capital to Kanauj. It is famous as the most sacred place in the holy land of Kurukshetra. Its name Sthanesvara means 'the place of god' or 'gods of the place'. It being the former capital of Harsha was an important seat of Buddhism as well. In addition to the sangharamas, there was an Asokan stupa also which, according to our pilgrim, contained a peck measure of the relics of Buddha. About 20 miles to the south of the city was a famous monastery at the village of Gokantha or Govinda. This monastery had a succession of towers with overlapping storeys. According to Hiuen Tsang, the monks of this monastery were 'virtuous and well mannered, possessed of quiet dignity'.

Srughna[14] **:**—'This country is about 6000 li in circuit. On the eastern side it borders on the Ganges river, on the north it is backed by

great mountains. The river Yamuna flows through its frontiers. The capital is about 20 li in circuit, and is bounded on the east by the river Yamuna. It is deserted, although its foundations are still very strong.... The disposition of the people is sincere and truthful. **There are five sangharamas with about 1000 priests. They deliberate and discuss in appropriate language (choice words) and their clear discourses embody profound truth. Men of different regions of eminent skill discuss with them to satisfy their doubts'.**

Comments :—Srughna has been identified with the village of Sugh, near Jagadhri, in Ambala District. Cunningham says[15], "The village of Sugh occupies one of the most remarkable positions that I have seen during the whole course of my researches. It is situated on a projecting triangular spur of high land, and is surrounded on three sides by the bed of the Jamuna, which is now the western Jamuna Canal, on the north and west faces it is further protected by two deep ravines, so that the position is ready made stronghold, which is covered on all sides, except the west, by natural defences". Hiuen Tsang stayed at Srughna for about 4½ months from November 635 A.D. onward. Here, in the company of

Jayagupta[16], a famous Buddhist scholar of that time, the pilgrim studied the Vibhasa of the Sautrantika School. The monastery in which Jayagupta resided was to the south-west of the capital and to the west of the river Yamuna. Outside its eastern gate was a stupa which was built by Asoka to commemorate the Buddha's visit to this place. Nearby was another stupa which contained relics of the Tathagata's hair and nails. Two more stupas on the right and left of this stupa contained the hair and nail relics of Sariputta and Moggallana, two famous disciples of the Buddha.

As is evident from the eye witness accounts of Hiuen Tsang, the religion of the Buddha was quite flourishing in the places visited by him from Taxila to Srughna (Sugh). In all, there were about 100 Viharas and more than 5000 Bhikkhus in the States of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. These facts and figures speak only of some of the places which Hiuen Tsang happened to visit. There might have been many more monks and monasteries in other places not visited by him.

For a number of years Hiuen Tsang was the guest of Harsha who treated the illustrious pilgrim with utmost reverence and hospitality.

When Hiuen Tsang was about to leave India, Harsha convoked a grand assembly at Kanauj to honour the distinguished guest. This assembly was attended by six thousand Bhikkhus from all over India. At the site of this historic Conference, a hundred feet high tower was raised and on the top of it a golden image of Lord Buddha, equal to the King in stature, was kept. On this occasion, a grand prooession was also taken out. After the Kanauj conference, Harsha took Hiuen Tsang to Prayaga (Allahabad) where he was holding his sixth quinquennial assembly. This grand display of charity or the Maha Moksha Parishad, as it was called, commenced with the worship of Lord Buddha and lasted for seventy five days.

Harsha passed away in 647 or 648 after a glorious reign of about 42 years. With his passing away, Buddhism, which had seen great resurgence under his patronage, lost a great protector and benefactor. This hastened its decline and ultimate disappearance from India.

REFERENCES

1. Bana, Harsha Carita, Translated by E.B. Cowell & F.W. Thomas, 1961 edition, preface, P. xi.
2. Ancient Geography of India I, Buddhist Period, 1963 edition, Appendix A, pp. 475-79.
3. Samuel Beal, Chinese Accounts of India (Travels of Hiuen Tsang) 1958-Volume II, p. 207.
4. Author's Comments in all cases are essentially based on (i) Beal's Buddhist Records of the Western World, (ii) Watter's 'On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India', (iii) Cunningham's Ancient Geography of India, (iv) B.C. Law's Geography of Early Buddhism, (v) Nando Lal Dey's 'The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaval India, (vi) Surrendranath Sen's India through Chinese eyes' and (vii) Imperial Gazetteer of India.
5. S.N. Sen, India through Chinese eyes, p. 23.
6. Beal, Travels of Hiouen Thasang, Volume II, p. 208.
7. Ibid. pp. 209-210.
8. S.N. Sen, India through Chinese eyes, p. 33.
9. Beal, Travels of Hiouen Thsang, Volume II, p. 210.
10. N.L. Dey, The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaval India, 1927, p. 106.
11. Watters 'On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India, p. 299.
12. Beal, Travels of Hiouen Thsang, Volume II, p. 211.
13. Ibid. p. 215.
14. Ibid. pp. 217-18.
15. Ancient Geography of India, 1963 edition, p. 291.
16. S.N. Sen, India through Chinese eyes, p. 34.

Chapter VII

FORGOTTEN CREED

After the death of Harsha, India once again fell prey to anarchy and confusion. The Rajputs, a warrior class which had just come into being, took advantage of the disorder and disturbances in the country and made themselves masters of Northern India. They, thus, laid the foundation of many Independent States. The researches by modern scholars have shown that by and large the Rajputs are the descendents of the Parthians, Scythians, Huns etc., who invaded India from time to time and settled in this country permanently. Since they were nomadic tribes from Central Asia and possessed great martial spirit, the mild and gentle teachings of the Buddha did not appeal to their mind. The loss of the royal patronage, therefore, hastened the decline of Buddhism.

The Rajputs ruled over Punjab for about four centuries from 700 A.C. onward and this entire period was full of trouble and turmoil as thoughout this period either the Rajput

kings were fighting among themselves or were trying to prohibit the Muslim invaders from coming to India.

The Muslims intruded into Punjab in 977 A.C. under the leadership of Subuktgin, the ruler of Gazani, who attacked the borders of Punjab, reduced certain forts and returned to Gazani with a large booty. With the intrusion of the Muslims into Punjab, the final stage for the decline of Buddhism from the land of the five rivers was set in. Mahmud, who succeded his father Subuktgin in 997 A.C., during his numerous raids plundered and destroyed whatever little remnants of Buddhism were left in this area. After his victory in the battle field in 1008, Mahmud headed towards Nagarkot (modern Kangra) and plundered the famous Hindu and Buddhist temples[1] there on an unlimited scale. Mahmud came once again in 1011. This time he looted Thanesar, plundered its inhabitants, destroyed its historic temples and went back with a large booty. The Punjab was ultimately annexed to Gazni by Mahmud in 1021. The Ghazni Dynasty continued to rule over Punjab through the Governors upto 1186 when Mohammad Ghori conquered it.

Unlike his predecessor, Mohammad Ghori came to conquer and retain the territory conquered. From that time onward, therefore, the land of the five rivers was continuously under the Mohammadan rule, though under different dynasties, till the Sikhs under the leadership of Maharaja Ranjit Singh became the masters of Punjab in the closing years of the 18th century.

With so many upheavels in the political field, the religion of the Buddha was bound to suffer and it did suffer to the maximum extent possible. As, however, no religion can disappear over-night the religion of the Buddha must have also lingered on in Punjab for a few centuries more after the fall of the Harsha Empire.

The fact that Buddhism was a living religion in some parts of Punjab till the 12th 13th century is amply proved by the two inscriptions of Raja Asoka-balla[2] or Asokachalla[3] discovered at Bodh Gaya, the Seat of Buddha's Enlightenment, in Bihar. According to the first inscription, Asoka-balla donated funds for carrying out some repairs to the Great Maha Bodhi Temple in the year 51 of the reign of Lakshmanasena, a King of Bihar. This would

be 1251 A.D., according to Dr. A.S. Altekar and 1157 A.D , according to Cunningham. In this inscription, the last Punjabi Buddhist king, calls himself as the King of Sapadalaksha in the Punjab and pays his homage to the Buddha in these words[4] :

"Adoration to Buddha ! The Great S amana. He it is who tells what the root is from which virtue springs, as also what it is that chokes that virtue. This is the virtuous gift of the great king, the illustrious Asokaballa Deva, an adherent of the Excellent Mahayana School, a great upasaka, pious at heart. May, whatever be its merit, be for the advancement in spiritual knowledge, first of my father and mother, and after them of all beings".

The territorial limits of the Sapadalaksha kingdom have not been identified so far by any scholar. The Sapadalaksha country is known as the earliest Himalayan tract to be inhabited by the Aryans Cunningham equates Sapadalaksha with the Sawalak[5] (Siwalik hills) in the Punjab. The Siwalik range is a line of low hills (2000 ft. average elevation) as we go from Hoshiarpur in the Punjab plains towards Kangra Valley. In ancient days, the hill

country between Beas and Sutlej and the Jullundur Doab was known as Jalandhara or Trigarta. In the 7th century, when King Wuddhi (Udito) was ruling the Trigarta country, Jullundur city was its capital. After the Muslim onslaught in about 1000 A D., however, the territory of the plains was lost and Kangra became the capital of the hill province[6]. Raja Asoka-balla appears to have regained the plains of Duab and added to the hill province[7]. So the Sapadalaksha kingdom may have atleast covered the Jullundur Hoshiarpur - Kangra - Mandi complex, with possibly Kangra (Nagarkot) as capital. As we know, Nagarkot or Kangra was for a long time a stronghold of the Mahayana Buddhists in the Punjab. Significantly enough, Raja Asoka - balla also declares himself as 'an adherent of the Excellent Mahayana School'.

Some light on the condition of Buddhism in the Punjab in the 13th century is also thrown by the travel accounts of the Tibetan pilgrims, who came to Punjab (Jalandhara-Pitha) to pay their homage to the second Nagarjuna (600-650 A. D), the founder of Vajrayana.

Of the numerous Tibetan pilgrims, the most important ones were: 'Orgyan pa and his master Godts' an pa. The pilgrim Orgyan pa, who undertook his pilgrimage most probably after 1250, has left for us a brief but interesting description about the Jal ndhara country i. e. the territory between the Sutlej and the Beas, including the Kulu valley. His travel account runs as follows [8]:

"The country which is very big is called I sva lan dha ra, but it has numberless towns; Naga ko te means in Tibetan 'The castle of the snake'. He stopped in that place for about five months But since the nourishment was scanty and agreeable food was lacking, his body was in a very bad condition. Then he returned to Tibet. Avoiding the route he took formerly, he went by a short-cut since he wanted to visit the holy place of Kuluta. After two days along that route he met in a place called ki ri ram a great ascetic called Anupama whom he asked for the explanation of the law. The other uttered 'Homage to the Buddha, homage to the Dharma, homage to the Community'. thus bestowing upon him the protection of the three jewels, and then he added; "we both are two Vajrabrethren, disciples of Acharya Nagarjuna. Go to Tibet

you will greatly benefit the creatures".

"Then he went to the holy place (tirtha) of Kuluta which corresponds to the knees of the body included in the circle of the (Vajra) kaya as represented by the twenty-four holy places. The core of this place is called Siddhi where there is a forest of white lotuses in flower; there, upon a stone are the foot-prints of Buddha. In that place one reaches quickly the best powers of the common degree, but one meets also many hindrances; in this place there are two venerable (bhadanta) and one yogin".

Another Tibetan traveller whose travel account is available was Stag Ts' an Ras pa. He says[9] :

"Then we went to Jalandhara. At that place there is a great town called Nagarkete (Nagarkot), in a river there is a triangular piece of land, digging the soil there is forbidden, there is a cemetary called Lan gura where there is a boulder which looks like a skull; a self-made image of Aryabhattarika appears there. To the north, there is a famous image called Javalamukhi where on looking at the divine face everything blazes in fire. Near the royal palace there is a cemetary called Mitapara

where there is a cave of the Mahatma Nagarjuna called Mitagulpa. In the proximity, there is a warm rock which is said to have been the meditation hut of Nagarjuna".

Nothing is known about Buddhism and its votaries in the land of the five rivers after the 13th century. Thereafter, it was completely forgotten in the whole of Punjab except in the high Himalayas where, because of the flow of Buddhistic ideas from Tibet, it continued to flourish and is even to-day a living faith.

REFERENCES

1. S.M. Latif, History of the Punjab, 1964 edition, pp. 82-83.
2. Sir A. Cunningham, Mahadodhi or the Great Buddhist Temple at Bodh Gaya, 1965 edition, pp. (iii) & 78.
3. Dr. A.S. Altekar, Introduction to Biography of Dharmasvamin, A Tibetan monk translated by Dr. George Roerich 1959, pp. xvi-xvii.
4. Cunningham, Mahabodhi or the Great Buddhist Temple, pp. 78-79.
5. Ibid., p. (iii).
6. The Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. XIV, 1908, p. 383.
7. cf. Altekar, Introduction to Biography of Dhamasvamin, p. xviii.
8. G. Tucci, Travels of Tibetan Pilgrims in the Swat Valley, 1940, p. 25.
9. Ibid. p. 43.

Chapter VIII

SOME ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS

Punjab, being the border State, has always been the hunting ground of the invaders who came one after the other in large numbers. These hordes of successive armies from abroad plundered, damaged and destroyed the historical buildings to such an extent that they could not withstand for long the ravages of time, weather and man.

Taxila is the only place in the greater Punjab which has yielded Buddhist antiquities covering a continuously long period of more than 800 years, that is, from the time of Asoka the Great till Taxila met its tragic fate at the hands of the savage Huns in the 5th century A.D. Of the numerous Buddhist remains discovered at Taxila the important ones are: the Dharmarajika Stupa, the Kalawan Monastery and the Jaulian Monastery:

1. **Dharmarajika Stupa**. Of all the stupas discovered at Taxila, the Dharamarajika Stupa is the most significant and the oldest. This

stupa has been nicknamed Chir (Split) Tope by the archaeologists because of 'a wider cleft which former treasure seekers drove through its dome, It was first built by Asoka over the body relics of the Buddha who is also called 'Dharmaraja', the Lord of the Law. These relics were discovered by Sir John Marshal in 1913-14 from a nearby chapel where they appear to have been re-enshrined by a Bactarian Buddhist. The text in the Kharoshthi characters on the golden reliquary containing the relics reads as follows[1] :

"In the year 136 of Azes, (A.D. 78), on the 15th day of the month of Ashadha, on this day relics of the Holy One (Buddha) were enshrined by Urasaka, Scion of Imtavhria, a Bactrian, resident of the town of Noacha. By him these relics of the Holy One were enshrined in his own Bodhisattva chapel at the Dharmarajika stupa at Takshasila, for the bestowal of health upon the great king, king of kings, the son of Heaven, the Kushan; in honour of (his) parents, friends, advisers, kinsmen, and blood-relations; for the bestowal of health upon himself. May this thy right munificent gift lead to Nirvana".

These relics were handed over by the Government of India to the Maha Bodhi

is seated 'The Buddha in the attitude of meditation (dhyana-mudra), with a standing Buddha to his right and left and two attendent figures. Of the latter, the one to the left carries the fly-whisk (chauri), the other is the Vajrapani holding the thunderbolt in his left hand[6]'.

The modern States of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh are practically dovoid of any archaeological remains. No traces are now available of the numerous Buddhist monasteries which were seen by Hiuen Tsang as late as the 7th century A.C., at Jullundur, Patti, Sirhind, Kulu, Thanesar and Sugh. However, some idea of their glory and grandeur can be had from the marvellous art and architecture of the monasteries discovered at Taxila.

A few Buddhist remains have come to light in the districts of Ludhiana, Hissar, Karnal, Gurgaon, Kangra and Mandi. The same are described below :

In the Ludhiana District, there is a place called Tihara in the north-west corner of Jagraon Tehsil. Tihara has been identified with tne city of Varat mentioned in the

Mahabharata. On the mounds here a large number of small square copper coins have been found having on one side the Buddhist[7] wheel and on the other the names of the Rajas in old Sanskrit. Besides coins, impressions of seals in burnt clay, large bricks, dice glazed pottery and many other antiquities, including the impressions of coins of the Yadheyas in clay have also been found. Another place important from Buddhist point of view in this Tehsil is Arura, which lies a little north of Bhader and about 10 miles south of Jagraon, "The old tank called Raniyana near Arura is frequented by numerous pilgrims. People say that the ancient name of this place was Ahichatta, and that its ruler, Raja Buddhamati[8], composed a work in Prakrit, entitled Dharma Katha, which is still used by the Puja tribe in the District".

In the Bhivani Tehsil of Hissar District, there is a small hill named Tosham, just 16 miles to the south of Hissar. Its summit is surmounted by an ancient fort. There is a Sanskrit inscription on a rock on the face of the hill. It seems to refer to a Scythian king, Tushara, who appears to have conquered the Gupta Golotkacha who reigned from 50-79 A.C. There is evidance to show that the Tosham hill had a Buddhist[9] monastery. The

date of inscription is said to be A.C. 162-244".

At Theh Polar, 10 miles north of Kaithal in Karnal District, also some evidence of Buddhism.[10] has been observed by way of Indo-Scythian coins unearthed there. At Chaneti, about 3 k.m. east of Jagadhri, the ruins of a Mauryan Stupa[11] built during the reign of Raja Dhanabhuti of Sugh (240-210 B.C.) have been discovered recently. Another recent discovery in Haryana is the image of the Buddha of the 4th-5th century discovered at Ghraura, a village in the District of Gurgaon.

In the Kangra District, close to Pathiar, 6 miles south-east of Kanihara, 4 miles from Dharmsala on the Chanru river, two rock votive inscriptions in Brahmi and Kharosthi have been discovered which record the foundation of Buddhist monasteries[12] in the 2nd century A.D. during the reign of the Kushana kings. A much later inscription (of 5th or 6th century) found at Cheri, a village 8 miles east of Nagarkot, contains the Triple-Gem Formula of the Buddhists. The ruins of a large Stupa[13], circumference of which is more than 800 feet, have also been discovered at Chetru, situated at a distance of 5 miles east of Nagarkot (Kot Kangra).

At Riwalsar, 15 miles from Mandi, there is an old shrine dedicated to Padma Sambhava[14] who was an Indian teacher and went to Tibet in 747 A.D. to propagate Buddhism. This Mani-Pani temple is believed to have been constructed at the spot where Padma Sambhava meditated.

So little yet so rich is the archaeological heritage of Buddhism in the States of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh.

REFERENCES

1. Sir John Marshal, A Guide to Taxila, 1960 (fourth edition), pp. 113-14.
2. Ibid., p. 106.
3. Ibid., p. 134.
4. Ibid., p. 166.
5. Ibid., p. 167.
6. Ibid., p. 167.
7. Punjab District Gazetteer, Ludhiana District, 1904 Volume XV A., p. 14.
8. Ibid., p. 17.
9. Ibid., Hissar, 1915 Volume IIA, Part A, p. 256.
10. Ibid., Karnal, 1918 Volume VI A, p. 14.
11. Article by Devendra Handa, Vishveshvaranand Indological Journal (Hoshiarpur) Volume IV. Part (i) (March 1964).
12. Punjab District Gazetteer. Kangra, 1904, Volume XA, Part A. p. 249.
13. Ibid., p, 258.
14. Ibid., Mandi State, 1920, p. 17.

Chapter IX

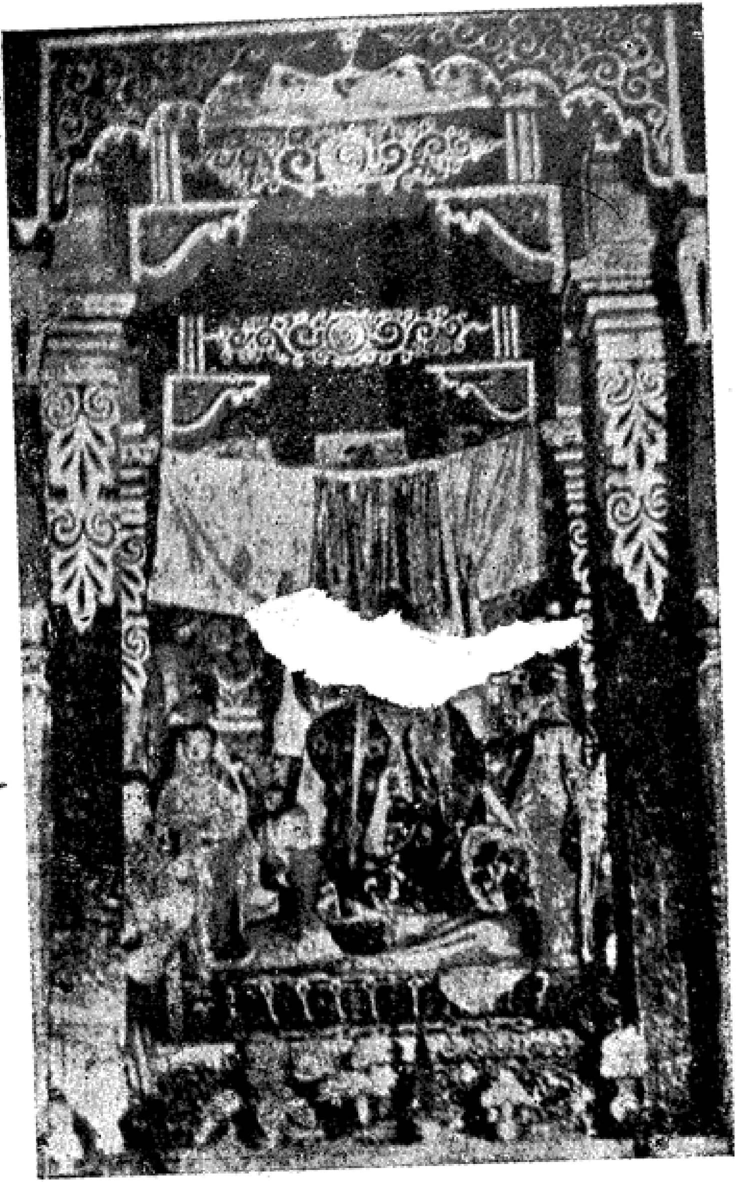
REVIVAL AND SURVIVAL

The Buddhist revival movement in the Punjab began, as every where else in India, towards the close of the 19th century. Anagarika Dharmapala, founder of the Maha Bodhi Society of India, was the first missionary in modern times to bring the message of the Buddha to the people of this ancient land. He visited Kurukshetra, Thanesar, Ludhiana, Amritsar, Lahore, Rawalpindi and Panja Saheb in the months of March-April 1899 and gave a series of lectures on Buddhism.

Following Dharmapala's visit, a few enlightened Punjabis became interested in the teachings of the Buddha and embraced Buddhim. The most notable among them was Rai Bahadur Pandit Sheo Narain, an eminent advocate of Lahore. He not only himself came to the refuge of the Buddha but endeavoured to popularise His teachings as well. With this object in view, Rai Bahadur Sheo Narain wrote three pamphlets in English, namely, Asoka, Buddhism, and Sarnath-a Guide. He also



Buddha image from the Jaulian Monastery, Taxila (C. 4th-5th Century A. D.).



Buddha image in the Monastery at Poo in Himachal Pradesh.

wrote a booklet in Urdu. In 1931, when the Mulgandha-Kuti Vihara, Sarnath was opened, he gifted all books in his personal library to the Sarnath Library. Rai Bahadur Sheo Narain passed away in 1936. Another notable Punjabi to embrace Buddhism was Dr. Har Dayal, the well known revolutionary and freedom fighter. Har Dayal was born in Delhi in 1884. After graduating from Delhi, he joined the Punjab University, Lahore. In 1905, he went to the Oxford University, England and did his Ph.D. Dr. Har Dayal was an author of distinction and wrote a number of thought provoking works. His most famous treatise on Buddhism 'The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Sanskrit Literature' was published in 1932 and still remains as unsurpassed work in that field. Har Dayal passed away in 1939.

The most eminent Buddhist produced by modern Punjab is Bhadant Anand Kauslayayan. He was born in 1905 in the village of Sohana, six miles from Chandigarh. He graduated from a College in Lahore. To begin with, he became a Hindu Sadhu with the name of Brahmchari Vishva Nath. Then he turned to Buddhism, and on February 10, 1928 Brahmachari Vishva Nath became Bhadant Anand Kausalyayan at the hands of the late

Ven. L. Dhammanand of Vidyalankar Pirivena, Kelaniya, Ceylon. Since then, this first Punjabi monk of modern times has devoted all his might for the revival of the Buddha-Dhamma in India. Bhadant Anand Kausalyayan is well-known as a progressive Hindi writer. His fertile pen has given us more than 25 books on varied subjects. On his return from Ceylon, where he worked as Head of the Hindi Department, Vidyalankar University, Kelaniya from 1958 to 1968, Ven. Anand Kausalyayan has established his headquarters at Deeksha Bhoomi, Nagpur, where Dr. Ambedkar embraced Buddhism, and is doing his best to further the cause of Buddhism in India. At his initiative, a piece of land has been purchased in Jullundur city for the first Buddha Vihara in the Punjab.

Another eminent Buddhist produced by modern Punjab is Dr. R.L. Soni. He was born in 1904 at Bajwara in Hoshiarpur District. After graduating in Medicine and Surgery in 1929 he visited Burma on a pleasure trip. The Buddhist atmosphere of that country made such an immediate and profound impression on his mind that he settled down for ever in Burma. Six years later, in 1933, he embraced Buddhism. Ever since then Dr. Soni has been

devoting all his energies to the cause of the Buddha-Dhamma. In 1950, he founded the World Institute of Buddhist Culture, Mandalay, an institution devoted to the propagation of Buddhism as an instrument of human welfare and world peace. Dr. Soni is an author of distinction, and has written a number of thought-provo ing treatises on the Buddhist history, philosophy and culture.

Statistically speaking, the modern States of Punjab and Haryana do not have many Buddhists. In fact, there were practically no Buddhists in these States till 1956 when the Buddhist revival movement in India entered into an era of intense activity following the lead give by the late Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. Therefore, almost all the Buddhists in these two States are new converts. In 1961, the district-wise population of Buddhists in these States was as under :

PUNJAB

	District	Population
1.	Ludhiana	381
2.	Jullundur	299
3.	Amritsar	251
4.	Ferozepur	94
5.	Gurdaspur	90
6.	Hoshiarpur	31
7.	Bhatinda	23
8.	Kapurthala	20
9.	Patiala	11
10.	Rupar	—
11.	Sangrur	—
	Total	1200

HARYANA

	District	Population
1.	Rohtak	405
2.	Hissar	268
3.	Ambala	32
4.	Gurgaon	41
5.	Karnal	—
6.	Mahendergarh	—
	Total	746

As compared to the total population of Punjab (112 lakhs) and Haryana (76 lakhs), the population of Buddhists in these States is of no consequence. Even this insignificant population is scattered in numerous towns and villages with the result that there is no organised Buddhist community. Neither there are any Viharas nor resident Bhikkhus in both the States.

We now turn to Himachal Pradesh where Buddhism has survived and which, after Ladakh, has the largest chunk of Buddhists (19220) in the whole of Northern India. In 1961, the district-wise population of Buddhists in Himachal Pradesh was as follows :

	District	Population
1.	Lahaul and Spiti	9503
2.	Kinnaur	3569
3.	Kangra)	3389
4.	Kulu)	
5.	Chamba	1733
6.	Mahasu	759
7.	Mandi	140
8.	Sirmur	104
9.	Simla	20
10.	Bilaspur	3

Let us now see to what extent the Himalayan Buddhists are practising their religion. First of all, we will take the valleys of Lahaul and Spiti which have the largest Buddhist population. These valleys lie at a height of 10000 to 16000 above sea level and are separated from the Kulu valley in Himachal Pradesh by the famous Rohtang Pass, which is also known as the Pass of the Dead. The Lahaul valley lies beyond Rohtang Pass towards the north comprising the watersheds of the Chandra and the Bhaga rivers which later on join to form the Chenab. In area, it is 2200 sq. miles and has an average altitude of 12000 ft. Spiti which lies to the east of Kulu in the extreme north east corner is also beyond Rohtang Pass. Spiti, locally pronounced Piti, is a Tibetan word meaning middle province. It is bounded on three sides by Ladakh, Tibet and Bashar (Rampur). It is 2,931 sq. miles in extent.

Buddhism is said to have entered Lahaul and Spiti sometime in the early centuries of the Christian Era even though it was introduced into the country of the Himalayas in the third century B.C. by the missionaries led by Ven. Majjhimo who were deputed by Asoka to convert the people of Himawanta as a part of his Dhamma-Vijaya campaign. The Buddhists

of Lahaul and Spiti are very much devoted towards their religion and their valley is studded with Gomphas (Viharas). Owing to close proximity to Tibet, the impact of the Tibetan culture on the people of Lahaul and Spiti is quite significant. They follow the Tibetan form of Buddhism and their monks are called Lamas. The most important monasteries in this area are at Keylong, Kardurg, Billing, Shashan, Sissue and Tupchiling in Lahaul and at Ki, Kye, Kioto, Kibor, Dungkar, Hansa and Losar in Spiti. The ancient monasteries have woodden structures with pyramidal roofs. Some of the monasteries have beautiful paintings depicting scenes from the Jatakas and the Buddha's life. Apart from monasteries, almost every family has a chapel of its own.

After the district of Lahaul and Spiti, the district of Kinnaur has the largest number of Buddhists. Here also the Lamaist form of Buddhism is prevalant. The entire valley of Kinnaur is studded with monasteries, the important ones being at Poo, Chini, Kanum and Kalpa. Of all the monasteries in Kinnaur, those at Kanum, a village at an elevation of 9600 ft. just on the Hindustan-Tibet Road, about 86 miles from Simla are most important.

This ancient village has as many as 7 temples[3] though its population is only 700. Of these, the Kangyur monastery and the Lundup Ganfel Gompha are especially worthy of note here.

The Kangyur monastery, the most ancient in Kanum, is situated in the heart of the village. It has a very good library which contains 108 Kangyur and 200 Tanjur books written in Tibetan script. Annually the lamas are engaged by the villagers to read these books on their behalf. This library was made use of by the famous Hungarian scholar, Alexander Cosma de Coros (1784-1882) who stayed at Kanum for over three years in 1828-30 and, with the assistance of Lama Sangs-Ragyas P Hun Tsons, nearly completed the Tibetan-English Dictionary (40,000 words) and Grammer which were later published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta.

The Landup Ganfel Gompha is situated on the top of the village and is a residential monastery. It is said to have been built by Shakya Virbhadra[4] of Kashmir, the last Sangharaja of India, who fled from India in about 1213 A.C. and lived for 10 years in Tibet. On his way back he stayed for some months at Kanum and founded this Vihara. The present

structure is, however, of recent origin. This monastery is quite spacious and has beautiful mural paintings on its walls.

Kinnaur as well as in Lahaul and Spiti, the famous Mahayana mantra 'Om Pani Padme Hum' (Hail thou possessor of Jewel Lotus) is considered by the Buddhists as saviour from all dangers, and is almost continuously recited by the devoted persons. Not only that, it is often written on a piece of cloth or inscribed on a stone and left on the spot where it is pronounced by the devotee. Such monuments are called mane walls or chortens and can be seen every where near villages, on tops of passes, near fordes and on the banks of rivers.

After Kinnaur, we come to the Kulu-Kangra Valley. The most important Buddhist centres in this Valley are Kulu, Dharmsala and Dalhousie. The main transit railhead for all of them is Pathankot. The town of Kulu, which is about 175 miles beyond Pathankot, has even in the past played an important role in the history of Buddhism in the Punjab. In the 7th century A.D. it was such an important centre of Buddhism that Hiuen Tsang, not minding the dangerous route through the high

Padma Sambhava who meditated here before going to Tibet in 747 A.D. to propagate Buddhism. This fair is attended by a considerable number of Buddhists from all over Himachal Pradesh, and even Ladakh.

As is evident from the facts and figures highlighted in the preceding pages, the religion of the Buddha is very much inter-woven with the daily life of the Himalayan Buddhists. Truly, their devotion to the Buddha-Dhamma is par excellence.

REFERENCES

1. Census of India 1961, Paper No. 1 of 1963-Religion.
2. Census of India 1961. Volume XIII-Part VI-No. I-Village Survey Monograph of Tandi, a village in Lahaul and Spiti District.
3. Census of India 1961, Volume XX-Part VI-No. 12-Himachal Pradesh—A Village Survey of Kanum.
4. Rahul Sankrityayan, Kinner Desh (Hindi).

Chapter X

BUDDHISM AND SIKHISM

In the preceding chapters we have surveyed briefly the development, decline and revival of Buddhism in the States of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. To complete the story, let us now turn to the influence of Buddhism on Sikhism, the predominent religion of modern Punjab.

Sikhism is younger to Buddhism by over 2000 years as Guru Nanak, its founder, was born in 1469 A.D. whereas Lord Buddha lived in the 6th century B.C. Inspite of that, and the fact that Sikhism arose at a time when almost all traces of Buddhism had disappeared from India, the religion of the Buddha can be said to have left its mark on the Sikh religion. To quote only a few instances :

In the Adi Granth, the holy book of the Sikhs, there is a reference to Lord Buddha at more than one place, though sometimes He is grouped with the Siddhas and Yogis for

praising and eulogising God as in the following hymns :

1. Sivas speak of Him, Siddhas speak of Him,
   The Buddhas He has created, proclaim Him[1].
2. On the top of them
   How many adepts,
   Buddhas and Yogis are there.
   His worshippers are
   numberless, saith Nanak[2].

The Buddha did not recommend the worship of God and a Buddhist does not bother about Him. The Sikhs, however, lean heavily on God. Sikhism, therefore, like all other theistic religions differs in theory from Buddhism. But the influence of Buddhism on its practical aspects is visible in many ways. Mark what Sher Singh says in 'Philosophy of Sikhism' regarding the influence of the Buddha and Buddhism on the Sikh religion. "From other Hindu systems Sikhism does not so much differ in theory as in practice, but in the case of Buddhism, the opposite is true. There is no borrowing in theory but the influence is visible in some practical aspects. Buddha tried to abolish caste and his idea of brotherhood becomes important theme with Nanak. Purity

of heart and sincerety in our dealings with mankind were the essence of religion for Nanak. These virtues were the first to be emphasized by Buddha. No sanctity of any particular language is the third common element in the teachings of the two prophets. Buddha preached in the spoken language of the people and was the first Indian prophet to become a missionary. In these respects Nanak very closely resembles Buddha[3]".

When the Buddha traversed and sanctified the soil of India, the self indulgent people lived the lives of luxury and sin, and the ascetics practised self-mortification in various ways. The Buddha declared both these ways as futile and unworthy of attaining Nirvana. He preached the Middle Path that is avoidance of the two extremes-the life of luxury and passion and the life of self-torture through pennance. The founder of Sikhism preached the essence of the Middle Path in another sense. He exhorted his disciples to avoid the extremes of Hinduism and Islam, the two religions prevalent in the Punjab in those days. Lord Buddha denied the authority and sanctity of the Vedas, denounced the caste system, sacrifices and rituals, and exhorted His followers to lead a

simple and moral life. He emphasized the need of self-less service to the humanity and gave the clarion call of Bahujana Hitaye, Bahujana Sukhaye (welfare and well-being of the many). The Sikh Gurus almost preached literally these Buddhistic ideas. In the Rahtnama or Book of Guidance, Gobind Singh the tenth and last Guru, exhorts the Sikhs not to follow the doctrines of the Vedas, Puranas and Quran. He further tells them not to perform Shradhas or ceremonies of the anni versaries of the dead. Regarding caste, the Guru says, 'there must be no caste and all must be equal, no man greater than the other'. The ideal of service is also equally emphasized in Sikhism.

The Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, commonly known as Triple Gem (Tri-Ratna) are the three basic principles of Buddhism. When the Buddhists take the Triple Refuge (Tri-Sarana) it means that they take refuge in the Buddha (Founder, Teacher or Guru), His Word and the Assembly of the venerable monks (both past and present). Almost the same idea of Tri-Sarana is reflected in the Sikh formula of having faith in the Guru, the Word and the Sangat. The only difference in the

Triplegem of the Sikhs is that the Bhikkhu Sangha is replaced here by the congregration of the lay devotees but the pattern remains the same[4].

Every lay Buddhist is expected to lead his life in accordance with the Five Precepts (Panch Sheel) enunuciated by the Buddha. These precepts are vows to abstain from killing, stealing, debauchery, telling lies and taking intoxicating drinks and drugs. These precepts are, therefore, necessary ingredient of a Buddhist's daily life. The Sikhs too have vows to take, but in their case these are external signs of the body. The Sikhs are enjoined to wear the five K's, viz, the Kesh (long hair), Kachha (short breeches), the Kara (iron bangle), the Kirpan (sword) and the Kangha (comb). Though the five Precepts and the five K's differ from each other, the fact remains that the 'five vows' are important in both the religions. The figure of five is dear to the Buddhists and the Sikhs alike for another reason also. Lord Buddha delivered His First Sermon at Sarnath before five recluses, Bhikkhus. The last Guru of the Sikhs too, first of all, initiated five Sikhs, known as the 'Five Beloved' (Panj Piyare) when he transformed the peaceful followers of

Nanak into a militant class and gave them the name of Khalsa.

The Four Noble Truths expounded by the Buddha lay emphasis on suffering (Dukha). He says, 'Birth is suffering, decrepitude is suffering, so are sickness and death suffering.' The all-pervading force of suffering is also accepted by Nanak. He says, 'the entire world is suffering' (Nanak, Dukhiya sab Sansar). In Sikhism, however, the end of misery and suffering has been made dependent on the Name (Nam) and Grace of God, and not on cessation of worldly passion as is the case in Buddhism.

The word 'Nirvana' (Pali: Nibbana) was first of all used by the Enlightened One and denotes highest bliss or a state of everlasting peace. The attainment of 'Nirvana' means extinction of lust, hate, and delusion which results in cessation of misery and suffering. In Sikhism also, the word 'Nirvana' is used with almost the same import and meaning. Here it means realisation of God which, in other words means cessation of worldly misery and suffering. Further, it is significant that Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Guru, while giving the definition of 'Nirvana' refers to the Buddha and says that it is the hardest thing to achieve:

"And that seeks the blissful Nirvana, Nanak, That seeking is the hardest of all games :

Only the rare Enlightened Ones master it[5]."

There are four principal centres of pilgrimage for the Buddhists. These are : **Lumbini**, the birth place of the Buddha; **Bodh Gaya** : the seat of His Enlightenment ; **Sarnath** : the place where He delivered His First Sermon, and Kusinara, the site of His Maha-parinirvana. Every year, lakhs of devout Buddhists from all over the world visit these four sacred shrines. The Sikhs too have four important pilgrim centres which are also known as four Takhats or Thrones of Panthic Authority[6]. These are : **Amritsar**: where Guru Arjun Dev compiled the Adi-Granth ; **Patna** (Bihar), the birth-place of Guru Gobind Singh ; **Anandpur**, where the Khalsa was born; and **Nander** (Andhra), where Guru Gobind Singh breathed his last. As is evident, the selection of the four Sikh shrines almost follows the Buddhist pattern.

In the hey day of Buddhism, the Viharas were the places where not only monks but lay people also could get food and shelter, whenever in need. The system of 'Guru Ka

Langar' food for every body in vogue in the Gurudwaras seems to have been adopted by the Sikh Gurus by taking cue from the Buddhist tradition prevalent amongst some Yogis. Further, the Gurus seem to have constructed the Golden Temple, Amritsar with four gates on the pattern of the Buddhist Viharas. Prior to the rise of Buddhism, the temples had only one gate. The Buddhists introduced the practice of four gates with a view to emphasize equality i. e. the Viharas were open to all.

The religion of the Buddha is associated with Sikhism in another way also. One of the famous Sikh shrines is Panja Sahib, near Hasan Abdal in Cambellpur Distt, West Pakistan. At the time of Guru Nanak, it was known as the spring of Baba Wali. When Nanak visited that place, it is said, Wali Shah hurled a large rock at him. The Guru turned it aside with his hand. The marks of the five fingers of Nanak on the rock gave it the name of Panja Sahib. The spring of Baba Wali at Panja Sahib has since been identified as the tank of Nagaraja Elapatra who was a Bhikkhu at the time of Kashyapa Buddha. Hiuen Tsang, who visited this place in the 7th century, that is, about 800 years before Guru Nanak and

about 400 years before the advent of Islam in the Punjab, has given an interesting account of this tank. He says :

"North-west of the capital about 70 li is the tank of the Nagaraja Elapatra (I-10-po-to 10); it is about 100 paces round, the waters are pure and sweet; lotus flowers of various colours, which reflect different tints in their common beauty (garnish the surface); this Naga was a Bhikshu who anciently, in the time of Kashyapa Buddha, destroyed an Elapatra tree. Hence, at the present time, when the people of that country ask for rain or fine weather, they must go with the Sramanas to the side of the tank, and then cracking their fingers (or, in a moment), after praying for the desired object, they obtain it[7]. ",

The Buddhist heritage has passad on to the Sikhs in another form also. The Sikhs consider the tank in the Golden Temple, Amritsar as the most sacred. This tank was a small lake when Ram Das, the fourth Guru, per chance discovered it. He acclaimed it Amritsar, the tank of nectar. This tank is said to be Buddhistic in origin. It has since been identified as the famous lake of Padmasambhava. St. Padamasambhava hailed from the

Swat Valley and was a powerful apostle of Tantrism. He flourished in the eighth century and did a lot to propagate Buddhism in Tibet where he went in 747 A. D. The Tibetans consider him as their Guru and regard him next only to the Buddha. The name Padmasambhava means the Lotus born. According to a Tibetan tradition[8], Padmasambhava was found by the King Indra-bodhi or Indrabhuti of Udyana or Urgyan on the petals of a lotus flower in this lake.

In oldern days the pilgrims from Tibet used to visit this lake while on pilgrimage to other Buddhist shrines in the Punjab. In this connection we reproduce below what the famous Italian scholar, G. Tucci, has said about the itinerary of the Tibetan pilgrims who came to India in the 13th century[9] :

"At the time of stag Ts' an rasa pa there was a regular intercourse between Jalandhra and Tibet as there is even now. There is hardly any doubt that this was chiefly due to the travels of Tibetan pilgrims of the r Dsogs C'en and specially bka rgyad pa sects who used to visit the sacred places of Buddhist tradition. After r God Ts' an pa, their number must have

considerably increased; to-day there is a regular intercourse along the routes and the tracks of Western Tibet.

From there, they descend to the holy tirthas of the Buddhist tradition, to Amritsar where the tank of the Golden Temple is believed to be the lake of Padmasambhava, to Bodh Gaya, to Sarnath."

As is svident from the foregoing, there are not only a number of similarities between Buddhism and Sikhism but the Buddhist heritage has also passed on to Sikhism in more than one form.

REFERENCES

1. Selections of the Sacred writings of the Sikhs-a Unesco publication-1960, p. 43-26th hymn of the Japji by Guru Nanak.
2. Ibid. p. 49. 35th hymn of the Japji.
3. Dr. Sher Singh, Philosophy of Sikhism, 1944, p. 106.
4. Sher Singh, Philosophy of Sikhism, p. 106.
5. Selections of the Sacred writings of the Sikhs. p. 206. Rag Gauri (p. 209).
6. This as well as other facts about Sikhism are based on 'Sikhism, Its Ideals and its Institutions—by Teja Singh, 1951 edition.
7. Beal, Travels of Hiouen Thsang, Volume II, p. 180.
8. Waddel, Buddhism of Tibet, 1959, p 380.
9. G. Tucci, Travels of the Tibetan Pilgrims in the Swat Valley 1940. p. 14.

Appendix I

THE IMPACT OF PALI ON PUNJABI

India is a land of many races, cultures and languages. Before the arrival of the Aryans in about 1500 B. C., the original inhabitants of India, whose refined culture and civilization has come to light through the excavations carried out in Harrapa, Mohenjo Daro and a few other places, had their own language. With the coming of the Aryans, Sanskrit, the language of the Vedas, came into prominence. In due course, it came to be associated with the Brahmanical religion and its study was monopolised by the few Brahmins. With a view to break the monopoly of the Brahmins and to convey His teachings directly to the common people, Lord Buddha eschewed Sanskrit and took up the spoken language of the people which thereby acquired a literary dignity and became the common vehicle of communication in India under the name of Pali. The word Pali means simply 'text' or 'sacred text'. As a language, Pali is an archaic Prakrit and in the days of Buddha it was the language

of the Magadha and adjoining territories. Pali, being the language of the Tipitaka (Sanskrit: Tripitaka), the Sacred Scriptures of the Buddhists, is even now a living language in India as well as in other Buddhist lands. The modern languages of North India have reached their present form through a process which can be divided into three phases of old Indo-Aryan (Sanskrit), middle Indo-Aryan (Prakrit), and new Indo-Aryan (Bhasha). Pali has played a significant role in this transformation. How and when the modern languages came into being has been well summed up by Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji. He says: "The period from about 600 B. C. to about 1000 A. D. is roughly the one of middle Indo-Aryan or the Prakrits, which may be described as that in which Sanskrit was modified by the masses of people in North India. In the Prakrits, there was a considerable amount of literary activity, and one of the Prakrits, Pali became the language of the Theravada Buddhists i. e. the Buddhists of the Hinayana or Southern School at the present days. The Jainas wrote in Ardha-Magadhi speech at first, which was based on the speech of Mahavira, the last Jaina Tirthankara or Teacher and Leader. Prakrit later developed into Apabhramsa during the last five centuries of first 1000 year after Christ.

From the various Apabhramasas, as they were current in different parts of North India, round about 1000 A. D. developed the modern Aryan languages of India, the new Indo - Aryan speeches".

Punjabi is the language of the north-western regions of India and Pakistan, particularly the areas covered by the famous five rivers: the Sutlej, the Beas, the Ravi, the Chenab and the Jhelum. Punjabi is divided into two parts i. e. Western Punjabi (spoken in West Pakistan) and Eastern Punjabi. It can be considered as one of the oldest languages of India as it is the language of the region which was the original home of the Aryans, and where the Aryan and non - Aryan civilizations inter-mingled and laid foundations of the Indo - Aryan speeches. Like other languages, Punjabi has also passed through the stages of Prakrit and Apabhransa. But now, it is a full-fledged language with its own dialects and literary styles. Here we will consider the impact of Pali on Punjabi.

From Pali to Punjabi may look a far cry. However, a closer examination reveals that Punjabi has inherited a good number of Pali words, and in many cases Punjabi words are more near to Pali than to Sanskrit. These words, though slightly abridged or modified to

suit the pronunciation of Punjabi language, still retain and convey the same meaning. Out of hundreds of words which are common to Pali and Punjabi, we have selected here only a few words just to illustrate how the Pali words have passed on to Punjabi, with slight modification as a result of the liguistic reformations during the last 2500 years :

Pali	**Punjabi**	**Sanskrit**	**Meaning**
accha	achha	shobhan	good,bright
aggi	agg	agni	fire
ajja	ajj	adhye	to-day
alla	gilla	ordar	wet
ambo	amb	amra	mango
attha	atth	ashta	eight
ayu	ayu	ayus	age, life
bhedo	bhed	bhid	division
budha	budha	briddh	old
chand	chand	chander	moon
dando	danda	dandhvana	stick
dasa	das	dash	ten
dakkhina	dakhni	dakshina	southern
des	des	desh	country
etha	ethe	atar	here
gahak	gahak	grahak	customer
ghar	ghar	grih	home
Janata	Janata	Jananta Jansmuh	public

Jettha	Jetha	Jyestha	eldest
kamm	kam	karm	deed, action
katha	kithe	kutar	where
keso	kes	kesh	hair
lohitam	lahu	rakt	blood
macch	machhi	matsya	fish
missa	missa	misra	mixed
pakka	pakka	pakatita	ripe
passo	passa	pasya	side
pucch	puchh	prucch	to ask
putto	putt	puttar	son
pacchima	pachhimi	prtichi	western
pothak	pothi	pustak	book
ratti	rat	ratri	night
rakkha	rakhi	rakhsha	guard, watching
rukkho	rukh	briksh	tree
sabba	sabh	sarv	all
sikkha	sikhia	shiksha	training
sis	sis	shirash	head
sukkha	sukka	shushak	dry
sukha	sukhi	sukhisi	happy
sapna	sapna	swapan	dream
settha	seth	shresth	best, greatest
samuddo	samunder	sagar	sea
tatta	tatta	usham	hot
uttara	uttari	udichi	northern

The Pali alphabet has 43 words and the Punjabi alphabet has 35 words whereas the Sanskrit alphabet has 50 words. All the three alphabets follow the same pattern with slight modifications. The Sanskrit consonents ऋ(re), क्ष (ksha), श (sha) do not find place either in Pali or in Punjabi, though in Punjabi सा (sa) is now converted into 'sha' by putting a dot below it. Thus the Punjabi alphabet is more akin to Pali than to Sanskrit.

In view of the aforesaid similarities between Pali and Punjabi, it can be safely said that Punjabi, the language of the modern Punjab, is indebted to a great extent to Pali, the language of the Buddha and the Sacred Buddhist Scriptures.

Appendix II

Chronology of Buddhism in the Punjab.

B. C.

525-490 Lord Buddha visited Punjab some time during this period.

321 Chandragupta founded the Maurya dynasty.

298 Chandragupta died and his son Bindusara succeeded him.

273 Asoka began to rule.

263 Asoka embraced Buddhism. During his reign Buddhism became the State religion of India including Punjab.

232 Asoka died.

184 Brihadratha, the last Maurya king, was assasinated by his commander-in-chief, Pushyamitra. Pushyamitra is said to have come upto Sialkot and persecuted the Buddhists on a large scale.

160 Menander (Milinda) began to rule over the Punjab with Sialkot as his capital. He was converted to Buddhism by Nagasena. He issued some coins with the Buddhist wheel (Dharmachakra).

100 About this time the rule of Milinda's successors came to an end.

80 Maues, the Saka leader, became the ruler of Punjab. He was the first ruler in India who issued coins with a Buddha figure.

58 Maues died.

A.C. 25 The Kushans, who were Buddhists, started ruling over the Punjab.

78 Kanishka, the most important Kushana king, began to rule.

100 About this time was held at Jullundur the fourth Buddhist Council under the Presidentship of Vasumitra.

200 The Kushana rule came to an end.

320 Chandragupta, chief of a small principality of Bihar founded the Gupta dynasty.

330 Samudragupta succeeded his father. He expanded his kingdom to cover most of India including Punjab.

Circa 400 Vasubandhu and his elder brother Asanga wrote many remarkable works on Buddhism.

401 Fa-hian visited Punjab.

415 Chandragupta II died. He was succeeded by Kumaragupta (415-455) and Sakandagupta (455-480).

480 Sakandagupta was succeeded by Buddhagupta who in turn was

succeeded by Baladitya in 500 A. D. Both these Gupta kings were Buddhists.

520 Nara Vardhana reigned about this time in Thanesar. He was succeeded by his son Rajya Vardhana I and grand-son Aditya Vardhana.

580 Prabhakara-Vardhana, succeeded his father Aditya Vardhana. He fought valiantly against the Huns. The Huns mercilessly destroyed the Buddhist shrines at Taxila.

606 Harsha Vardhana, the last Buddhist Emperor of India, began to rule.

630 Hiuen-Tsang in India. According to
644 him, there were as many as 100 Viharas and more then 5000 Buddhist monks in the Punjab.

647 Harsha died. Buddhism began to decline.

1250 Asokaballa or Asokachalla of Sapadalaksha (Siwalaks) in the Punjab visited Bodh Gaya in Bihar and donated large sums for carrying out repairs to the Great Maha Bodhi Temple. Till then, Buddhism was lingering on in the Punjab in one form or the other. Thereafter, it completely disappeared from the plains but continued to be a living faith in the high Himalayas.

1899 Anagarika Dharmapala, founder of the Maha Bodhi Society of India, visited Punjab and gave lectures on Buddhism at many places. With this, began the movement of revival of Buddhism in the Punjab.

1928 Bhadant Anand Kausalyayan, the first Punjabi Buddhist monk of modern times, was ordained as a Bhikkhu.

1956 Following Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's conversion to Buddhism, some of his followers in the Punjab also embraced Buddhism and the revival movement entered into a new phase in the Punjab as every where else in India.

27.8.74.